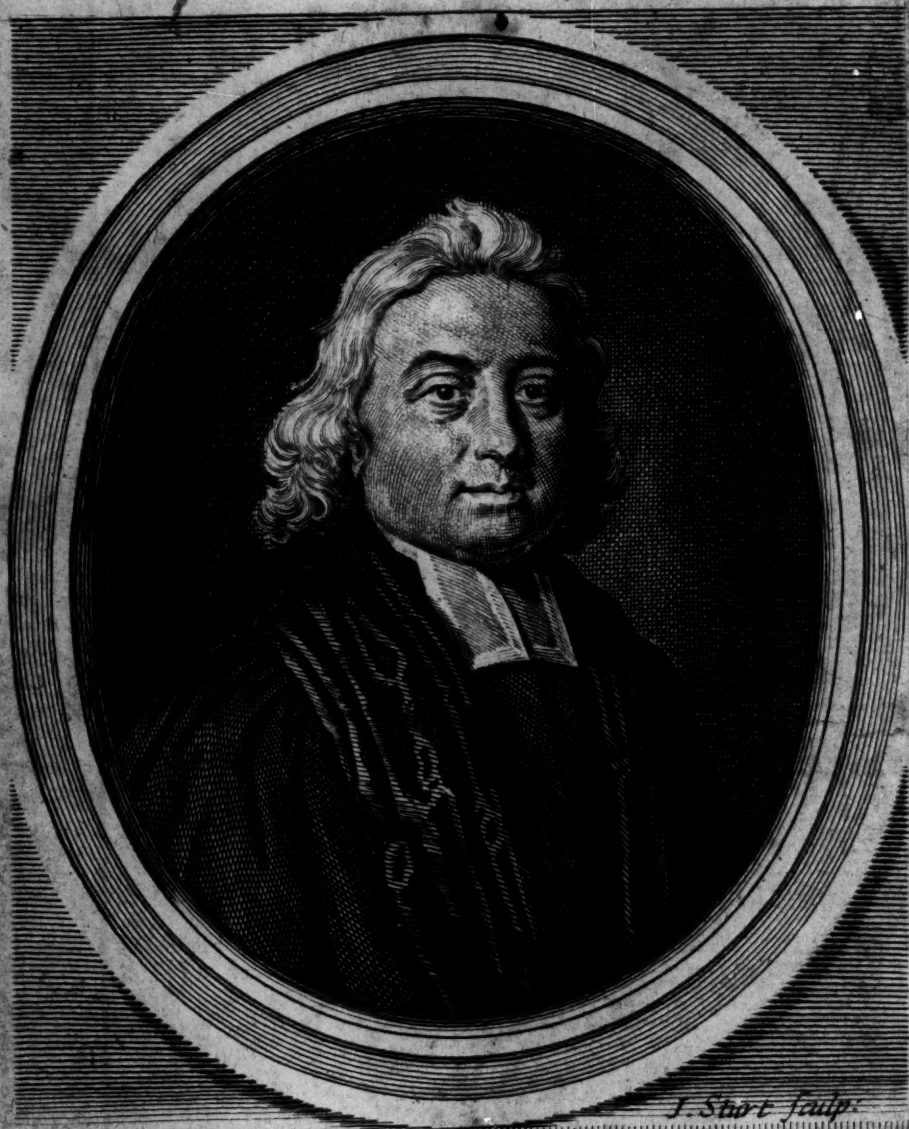
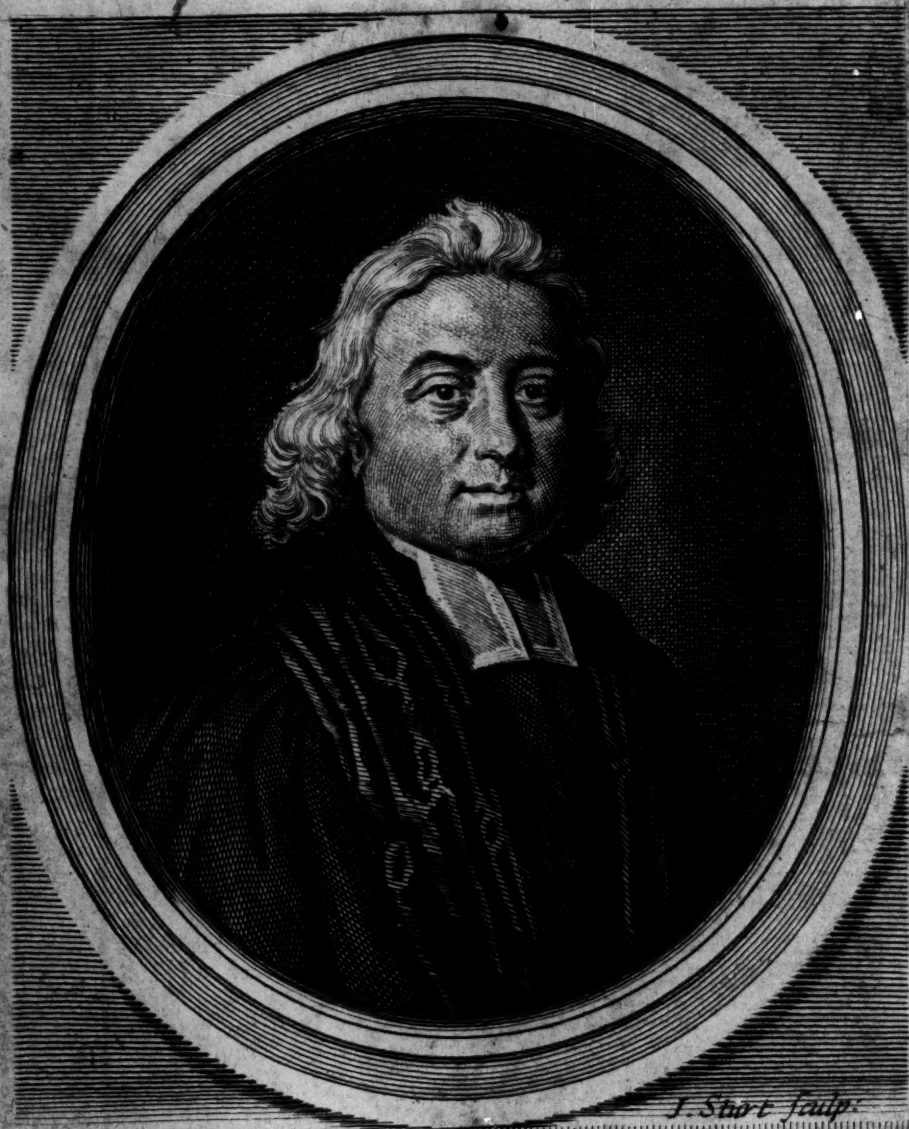




J. Short sculp.

Ospring Blackall, D.D.



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FIVE
SERMONS
UPON
SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

Together with an ANSWER to Mr. *Hoadley's*
LETTER.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
OFSPRING BLACKALL, late Lord Bishop
of *EXETER*.

L O N D O N:

Printed for R. WILKIN, at the *King's-Head* in St.
Paul's Church-Yard; MDCCXVII.

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UPON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS

Together with an ANSWER to Mr. Howard's
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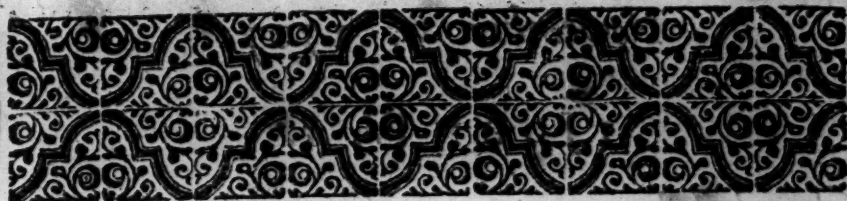


By the Right Rev. Father in God,
OF ABERYSTWYTH

LONDON

Printed for R. Wilkin, at the King's Head in St.
Paul's Church-Yard; MDCCLXXII.

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The Blessedness of the Poor in Spirit.

St. MATTH. V. 3.

*Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs
is the Kingdom of Heaven.*



IN Discourſing on theſe Words, 'twill be, I think, moſt proper to proceed in this Method: Firſt, to enquire who are meant by *the Poor in Spirit*; and then to ſhew wherein conſiſts their preſent Bleſſedneſs, and what will be their future Reward.

And by *the Poor in Spirit* (among ſeveral Interpretations that are given of the Phraſe) it ſeems to me moſt obvious and reaſonable to underſtand ſuch as have *the Spirit of the Poor*, or a *Spirit of Poverty*: *The Poor in Spirit* ſeem

to be oppos'd to *the Poor in Body, or in the outward Circumstances*. The Blessedness of the Text therefore may not belong to all that are commonly call'd Poor : Nay, it is certain it does not ; for there are some that are very Poor, and yet very Wicked too ; and no wicked Man can be *Blessed*, no wicked Man shall inherit the *Kingdom of Heaven*. Nor yet is this Blessedness confin'd only to those that are Poor : For, as a poor Man may not be of such a Spirit as is suitable to his low Condition, so 'tis possible that a Rich Man (even while he is Rich) may be of that Spirit ; and if he be, the Blessedness of the Text belongs to him no less than to a poorer Man of the same Spirit. And He may truly be said to be *Poor in Spirit*, or to have that *Spirit of Poverty*, to which the Text annexes a Blessedness and promises a Reward, who, whether he be Poor or Rich, or whatever his outward Circumstances are, is of such a Temper or Disposition of Mind, with regard to Riches, and to all other things of this Life, whether good or evil ; as they that be poor, are, or as it becomes those that are poor to be ; and who is consequently careful to adorn himself with all those Graces which are an Ornament to the Poor, and to practise all those Virtues, which a low Condition in the World is most apt to instruct Men in, and to incite them to.

For the farther Explication whereof it will therefore be needful to consider, what are the proper

proper Virtues of a poor and low Estate, what Virtues do best suit with, do best become a low and mean Condition; and then to shew that these same Virtues are also such as every Man of whatsoever State he is, High or Low, Rich or Poor, is bound to endeavour after, and that, as greatly conducing both to his present, and to his future Felicity.

I. Then, One Virtuous Disposition of Mind, very well becoming a State of Poverty, is *Humility*; 'tis but fit that they who are low in the World should be likewise lowly in their own Minds; of all Persons, Pride least becomes such; Poor and Proud do by no means agree together: It is not fit that the Poor should affect Greatness, or strive to make a shew above their Fortune; It becomes them above all others, to be easy in their Address, and courteous and obliging to all whom they converse with, and in all other respects to shew forth in their Carriage the Lowliness and Meekness of their Spirits.

And yet this Grace or Virtue of Humility, tho' it may be said to be most proper to a State of Poverty, is not peculiar to that State only; for 'tis a Duty requir'd of all *Christians*, to learn of their Master *Christ*, who was *meek and lowly in Heart*; and those Words of our Lord, *Luke xxii. 26.* are directed to such of his Disciples as were to be most of all advanc'd above others in this World. *The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over*

Mat. x. 29.

over them, — but ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

And indeed (as the wise Son of Ecclus. x. 18.

Syrach observes) *Pride was not made for Man*; neither for one Man nor for another; Not for Men of high Estate, any more than for Men of low Degree: For neither is the Matter wherein one Man may differ from another, in its self, very considerable; nor if it were, would it be a just Reason of Pride; because, whatever it is, it was the un-

1 Sam. ii. 7.

Rom. x. 21.

merited Gift of God, who *maketh poor, and maketh rich, who bringeth low, and lifteth up*; and can, and does, out of the same Lump of Clay, make one Vessel unto Honour, and another unto Dishonour. And 'tis well argu'd by the Apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 7. *Who maketh thee to differ from another; and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not receiv'd it?*

Humility therefore, tho' it may be perhaps best learnt in a low Estate, is manifestly the Duty also of the Rich. And blessed are they, whether they be poor or rich, who have this *Spirit of the Poor*; that is, who have an humble Opinion of themselves, and of all things belonging to them, who are little in their own own Esteem; neither attributing to themselves any Excellencies or Perfections which they have

have not, nor over-rating and over-valuing those they have, nor ascribing to themselves the Glory thereof.

They are blessed above others, as being by this excellent Temper of Mind, and the lovely Fruits and Effects of it in the outward Carriage, rendred amiable and grateful to all that know them; for there is nothing that so adorns and sets off a Man, nothing that so qualifies him for, and entitles him to Respect and Honour, as true Humility; whence the *Apostle* calls it, *the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit*, which, as it is of great Price in the Sight of GOD, so it is in the Sight of Men too; For Men naturally reverence those who have mean Thoughts of themselves; and on such as do not hunt after Honour, they are most ready and willing to bestow Honour.

1 Pet. iii. 4.

They are also blessed above others, because they are more at Ease and Quiet in their own Minds: For being of a humble Spirit, and thinking but meanly of themselves, they are free from Ambition, Envy, Anger, and Revenge, and all such like boisterous and turbulent Passions, which render the Proud very uneasy and unhappy in the greatest Affluence of worldly good things. An humble-minded Man, whatever his outward Condition and Circumstances in the World are, is calm, contented and thankful, and envies not the Condition of any that are plac'd above him;

whereas the Proud and Ambitious Man, (as if all the World were made for him alone) never thinks he has enough, or so much as he deserves; and whatever Portion of worldly good things he has, can take no Comfort or Satisfaction therein, for the want of those things

which he has not. Or if (as *Esth. v. 13.* *Haman* had) he has all the Plenty

of good things that his Heart can desire, yet if there be but one *Mordecai* that will not bow the Knee to him, and do him that Reverence which he expects, this alone is sufficient to discontent and disquiet him.

And as the humble in Mind are most blessed at present, so will they be also for ever; *Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*; that is, such, and such only as have this *Spirit of Poverty*, this Humility of Mind, have a Right and Title, by virtue of God's gracious Promise, to the Eternal Blessedness of the other World. *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted*, *Matth. xxiii. 12.*

And as the Happiness of Heaven is peculiarly annexed and promis'd to this Grace of Humility, so are also the Degrees of that Happiness, to the several Measures and Degrees of this Grace; The lowlier we are here in our own Thought and Opinion, the higher shall we be there in God's Favour, and our Crown will be so much the more Glorious. For,

Matth. xviii. 4. *Whosoever, says our Lord, shall humble himself as a little Child,*
the

the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

II. Another Virtuous Disposition of Mind very necessary to those who are in a poor and low Estate, is *Patience*.

The Poor have need of Patience, because this is one Evil usually attending Poverty, and a greater Evil it is than Poverty it self, that it exposes Men to Scorn and Contempt, makes them subject to Indignities and Affronts, renders them liable to Abuses and Injuries, which they, by reason of the Scantiness of their Fortune, and Want of Friends, are by no means able to fence off or avoid; and for what can't be avoided there's no Remedy but Patience. The Poor therefore having such need of Patience, 'tis very requisite that they should be endu'd with it; and the frequent Occasions that they have to exercise it, will naturally put them upon endeavouring to learn it.

But Patience is a Virtue which every Man also has great need of, and will have frequent Occasions for, the Rich as well as the Poor. *For Man is born unto* Job v. 7. *Trouble as the Sparks fly upward.* There is indeed no State or Condition of Life free from Trouble, and it is impossible that while we live in a miserable and naughty World we should meet with nothing in it to vex us. He that is above Contempt is the Object of Envy; and he that is not affronted to his Face may be slander'd

flander'd behind his Back ; and he that is too great to be crush'd or trampled upon by others, may yet suffer as great Mischief by secret Treachery ; and he that is powerful enough to resist Violence, may not be wary enough to avoid a Snare.

Besides ; There are some Evils, and those indeed the greatest of Human Life, which no Quality or Wealth does exempt Men from. For the Rich Man as well as the Poor may have unkind Relations, undutiful Children, false Friends, or unfaithful Servants ; The Rich as well as the Poor may be disappointed in his Designs, may be robb'd and spoil'd of what he has, may have a Body very sickly and infirm, and may suffer the sharpest Pains : And all these, and many more such like Evils, which no Man is by any Wealth or Dignity exempted from, are Tryals of our Patience, as well as those which are more peculiarly incident to Poverty.

And blessed are they, whether Rich or Poor, who have this *Spirit of Poverty* ; for they are plainly more blessed than others in their Afflictions, because they are more easy under them ; they are not gall'd and disquieted so much by the Evils that befall them, as fretful and impatient Men are. They, tho' they are under the very same Affliction with others, yet being calm and quiet in their own Minds, being void of those turbulent Passions which other Men in the like Calamity are subject
to,

to, suffer but half the Evil that other Men suffer.

And then this their Patience under their Sufferings conduces no less to their future Felicity; For the Evils and Calamities of this present Life are design'd by God as Trials of Men's Virtue, in which, if they acquit themselves well, they are thereby entitled to the Reward of Virtue; that is, to the Happiness of Heaven; and *these light Afflictions which are but for a Moment*, will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. 1 Cor. iv. 17.

III. Another Virtuous Disposition of Mind very requisite in the Poor, is *Contentment* with their present Condition, a quiet Resignation of themselves to God's Will, a Liking well those Circumstances which it has pleas'd the Divine Providence to place them in. For the Poor do want many of those Conveniences of Life which the Rich have; and therefore if they should fret and vex themselves for every thing that they could wish to have, but have not, they would be able to enjoy no Comfort in their Lives: If they should murmur and complain against Providence, and take it ill at God's Hands that he gives them not every thing that they could desire, their whole Life would be Murmuring and Complaint. The only Way therefore for such as are in a low Condition to be tolerably happy, is by bringing

ing their Mind to their Condition, by persuading themselves to be satisfy'd with Necessaries, and by firmly believing that God orders all things for the best.

But as necessary as Contentment and Resignation are to the Poor, they are no less the necessary Duties of the most Wealthy: 'Tis every Man's Duty, *in whatsoever State* he is, *therewith to be content*, and in all things that befall him to submit himself entirely to God's Will and Pleasure.

Nay more; so far as we can judge from the best Observation that we can make, Contentment and Satisfaction of Mind is as necessary to be Preach'd to and pressed upon, and is as rarely practis'd by the Rich, as the Poor; For tho' their real Wants are not many, perhaps not any at all, yet their fancy'd and imaginary Wants are commonly more and greater than Poor Mens are; and therefore if they set their Hearts upon every thing that they fancy, and are uneasy in the Want of every thing that they can think of to desire, (which they often are,) they will be as unhappy in their Abundance as the Poor Man is in his Scarcity; Nay, indeed they will be more unhappy, notwithstanding all their Plenty, than the Poor Man is in his Want even of many of the real Conveniences and Comforts of Life, in case they are not so well contented and satisfied with their present Condition as the Poor Man is.

But

But Blessed are they, who, whatever their Condition and Circumstances in the World are, are endued with this *Spirit of Poverty*, that is, are easy, and pleas'd, and contented in their present State; who desire no more than enough; who meekly resign up themselves to God to be disposed of as he pleases, and believe that to be best which he orders. They who are of this Temper, are happy in all Conditions; and they who have not this *Spirit of Poverty*, can't be happy in any. For the Happiness of *a Mans Life consists not* Luke xii. 15. *in the Abundance of the things that he possesses,* but in the Taste and Relish that he has of them, in the Satisfaction which he receives from them. He therefore who is contented, whatever his Condition be, is as happy as this World can make him, and much happier than all the World can make a Man to be, who is of a discontented Spirit.

And as this *Spirit of Poverty* conduces thus to our present Happiness, so it does no less to our future Felicity. They who are pleased with the Lot which God orders for them, have a kind of Heaven upon Earth, but their true Heaven is reserv'd for another Life; when all their Wishes shall be accomplish'd, and all their Desires fulfill'd; when they shall be fully satisfied with what they have, because they shall have all that can be desir'd; for they shall enjoy him who is the Fountain of all Good, *in whose Presence there*

Psal. xvi. 11.

is Fulness of Joy, and at whose Right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.

IV. Another Virtuous Disposition of Mind, well becoming such as are of poor and low Estate in the World, is *Trust* and *Hope* in God. They that have Riches are very apt to put Confidence in their Wealth; and they that have many and powerful Friends (as the Rich usually have) are apt to rely much upon them, and to expect great Help and Succour from them; and they that are very high advanc'd in the World are apt to imagine that their own Greatness will secure them from all Mischief. But what can the Poor do, who have neither Money, nor Friends, nor Authority, nor Power? What have they to trust to or rely upon? Why truly, nothing but God. In him they may hope, and from him they may expect Help; and if they have it not from him, they can look for it from none else. And because they have nothing else to trust to, they are commonly in a readier Disposition of Mind than others are, to place their Hope and Confidence in God.

But this likewise, tho' it be a Virtue that is best taught by Poverty, is nevertheless a Duty incumbent upon all; and accordingly the *Apostle* commands *Timothy*, to charge even them that are Rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, and that they do not trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God.

And

And blessed are they, whether they be Poor or Rich, that have this *Spirit of the Poor*.

They are blessed now, because what they trust to will not fail them, as all other things that Men are apt to put Confidence in, may, and oftentimes do: They know on whom they have believed, and have experienc'd his Goodness, and are certain that he can't be worse than his Promise. *Blessed are all they that put their Trust in him,* says the Psalmist, for none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

Psal. ii. 12.

—xxxiv. 22.

Nor is the Blessedness of such confin'd to this Life only; but *theirs also is the Kingdom of Heaven*. For God never fails them that put their Trust in him; and this is what all good Men do trust him for, not only that he will take Care of, and provide for them in this Life, but that he will also bestow upon them a better Life. They believe that all his Promises will be made good; and *having this Hope,* they endeavour to purify themselves even as he is pure. And this Faith so influencing their Practice, will be counted to them (as it was to Abraham) for Righteousness; and they (as he was) shall be called the Friends of God; and after this Life is over, shall be admitted to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven.

1 John iii. 3.

V. Other Virtues taught by a State of Poverty (which I mention together, as being nearly related, and grounded on the same Reasons) are *Industry*, *Temperance*, and *Frugality*.

They that want for nothing may think it needless to labour ; and they that have more than enough, are very apt to use too much ; and they that know no end of their Wealth, may be tempted to be careless and lavish in their Expences : But the Poor Man must labour, because he cannot live without Labour ; he must be temperate, because he can't afford himself more of any thing than is necessary ; and he must be frugal and saving, because otherwise the Fruit of his Labour will not be sufficient to answer all his necessary Occasions. These therefore being Virtues which the Poor are in a manner forc'd to by Necessity, may well be call'd Virtues of Poverty ; and they consequently may well be said to have the *Spirit of Poverty*, who, not being under the same Necessity, do practise the same Virtues by Choice.

And indeed these are all such Virtues as the Rich no less than the Poor are bound in Duty to practise, altho' they are not so much forc'd to it by Necessity.

For, first, as to *Industry* : Even he that has enough already for all his necessary Occasions, is not however allow'd by God to spend his Time, or any great Portions of it in Idleness, but

but is bound to employ himself in some Business that may render him useful to the World.

And then as to *Temperance*, He that has more than he has need to use, is not for that Reason permitted to live in Luxury and Excess, or to be intemperate in the use of any worldly Good.

And lastly, as to *Frugality*; Even he that has the most of all, is nevertheless oblig'd to be Frugal and Husbandly, and not to lavish or squander away what he has; because what he has is not his own, but is only a Talent committed to his Trust by his great Master, of which he must one Day give an Account. And if that Servant in the Gospel was condemn'd only for hoarding up his Talent, for not using it as he ought to have done; much rather

Mat. xxv. 30.

Luke xix. 20.

would he have receiv'd the same or greater Condemnation if he had fool'd and squander'd it away.

So that, we see, these Virtues, *Industry*, *Temperance* and *Frugality*, tho' they are such Virtues as Poverty does most naturally teach, are nevertheless the Duties of all; and that the Rich as well as the Poor are oblig'd to be thus *Poor in Spirit*.

And there is both a present Blessedness and future Reward belonging to all those who diligently practise these Virtues, of whatsoever Condition they are.

For 1st. As to *Industry*: Whether a Man be Rich or Poor, it is for his Ease and Delight to

have something to do, to have some Business to pass away his Time; mere Idleness being more tedious even than hard Labour.

And then as to *Temperance*, It is likewise no less for a Man's own Advantage, whether he be Rich or Poor, to be Temperate in all things; For by this means his Body is kept in Health and Vigor, and his Soul is best able to exercise its intellectual Faculties: By this means he escapes many sore Pains and Diseases which are the natural Fruits of Luxury and Intemperance, and which cut short the Lives of a great many in the midst of their Days.

And lastly, The Rich no less than the Poor will find their present Advantage in a *frugal* and wise *Management* of what they have: For extreme Poverty is not oftner the Effect of Idleness, than it is of ill Husbandry and Prodigality; and it rarely fails, but that he who can't learn the Virtue of Frugality, while he is in a Wealthy and Prosperous Condition, is forc'd to learn it afterwards by those Straits and Necessities which his Carelessness and Profuseness do in a short time reduce him to.

And as these Virtues of Poverty do thus conduce to our present Happiness, so do they likewise to our future Advantage. For,

First; The *Industrious* and *Laborious* Man, who suffers no Time to pass idle, who has always some honest Business to employ himself in, does by that escape a great many Temptations which he would not find it so easy to resist,

the Poor in Spirit.

resist, as it is to avoid. And indeed considering the Weakness of our Nature, and how prone we are to Sin, the best Security that any of us have that we shall not fall into a Sin, is by avoiding as much as is possible all Temptations to it.

The Practice of *Temperance* likewise is an excellent Preparation for a future Life. For he who has accustomed himself to use no more of those Provisions which God design'd for the Sustenance of our Bodies in this frail and perishing State than is needful for that Purpose; he who has not allow'd himself to eat or drink for Pleasure, but only for his necessary Sustenance; He who while he was in his Body did not use to gratify his Palate and his Senses; when he shall come to have a purify'd and spiritual Body (such as we shall have at the Resurrection) a Body that will suffer no Decay, and consequently will need no Sustenance or Recruit; will then have no Longing or Hangering after Meats or Drinks, or Corporeal Pleasures, but will delight to live as do the Angels, because he had us'd himself to live so here as much as possibly he could; and had rather, if he could have done it, have liv'd without those sordid Pleasures wherein Sensual Men place their only Felicity.

And lastly, *Frugality* likewise, or a wise and prudent Management of those worldly good things which we have, tho' it may seem a Virtue that is profitable only for this Life, is yet in

Truth a Virtue that does no less conduce to our future Happiness. For we are not (as was said before) the Proprietors of those things which we possess, but only Stewards; and we are then faithful in our Stewardship, when we do not lavish away, but husband well what is committed to our Trust; when we do not spend it idly, but improve it to our Master's Honour,

Luk. xii. 42, 43. or lay it out in such Ways as he has directed. *Who, says our Saviour, is that faithful and wise Steward whom his Lord shall make Ruler over his Household, to give them their portion of Meat in due season? Blessed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*

VI. Another virtuous Disposition of Mind very requisite to the Poor, and which a mean and low Condition in the World is very apt to work Men to, is a *Contempt of the World*; an Indifference of Mind towards it, and a Willingness to part with it. They that live in Ease and Plenty, and meet with no Crosses or Disappointments, can hardly forbear saying with the *Apostles*; *It is good for us to be here.* And there is no Thought more melancholy and unpleasant to them, than to consider that it will not be long before they must be forced to leave that Condition of Life

with which they are so much pleas'd. Ecclef. xli. 1. O Death, says the wise

Son of Syrach, *how bitter is the Remembrance of thee to a Man that liveth at Rest in his Possessions*

sessions, unto the Man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath Prosperity in all things?

But there is plainly no Reason that the Poor should be thus fond of this World, or so loth to go out of it. For what is all their Life here but Labour and Sorrow? They toil and take Pains, they rise early and work late, and, after all, can but just make a hard Shift to live: Their Fare, after all, is but slender, their Accommodations but mean; scarcely can they get enough for necessary Uses, much less can they make Provision for Pleasure and Delight. What is there then in this Condition of Life that can reasonably make Men very desirous to continue long in it, or unwilling to exchange it for the better?

Who is there that delights to be at an Inn, even tho' he has the best Accommodations that the House affords? But if his Lodging be cold or uneasy, and his Diet coarse; and either there are no Conveniences to be had in the House, or he has not wherewithal to purchase them; this must needs make him still more indifferent; or rather, it must needs make him more desirous to stay there as little a while as is possible, and to make all the Haste he can Home, where he hopes he shall find things much more to his liking.

Such a Temper of Mind, with regard to this World, being therefore what a State of Poverty is apt to bring Men to; whoever is of the same Temper and Disposition of Mind, of

whatsoever Condition he be, may well be said to have the *Spirit of the Poor*.

And indeed, whatsoever Condition we are of, it is highly reasonable that we should be of this Spirit; for in truth we are all but Strangers and Pilgrims here: We came from a better Place, and we hope we shall go thither again; And tho' while we abide here, some of us perhaps may be better accommodated than others are, yet still we are but as in an Inn, where the greatest Conveniences are more than over-balanced by the Inconveniences; and when we shall be come home to our Father's House, it will be much better with us all than it can be here. Why then should we be desirous to stay here? Why should we be fond of Life? Why, if we are in a Prosperous Condition, should we set our Hearts upon, or place our Happiness in a short-liv'd Pleasure? Or why, if we are afflicted, should we be much vex'd and disquieted by the Uneasiness of a Moment? It will be better for us all, if it be not through our own Fault, (it will be better, I say) even with those of us who are the most prosperous, when we shall leave this World, than it can be while we continue in it? Why then should we set our Affections upon any thing here? Why rather do we not let our *Heart be there where our true Treasure is*, and endeavour to sit as loose as we can from this World, which we must so soon go out of? And to this Purpose

we

we are exhorted by the *Apostle*,
(and his Exhortation is general, 2 Cor. vii. 29,
&c. respecting all Persons alike, the Rich, no less than the Poor) *This I say, Brethren, the Time is short; it remaineth that both they that have Wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this World as not abusing it; for the Fashion of this World passeth away.* Such an Indifference of Mind towards this World well becomes us all, whatever our Condition is, considering what a very short while we have to stay here.

And this Virtue also, no less than the others before-mention'd, conduces very much both to our present, and to our future Blessedness.

First, There is a present Blessedness belonging to those who are of this Temper. For he that has no great Opinion of the World, or of any thing in it, can't be very eager in his Desire after it; for why should he very earnestly desire what he does not believe would make him much happier? And the fewer things we desire, the easier we are, and the less liable to Disappointment.

And indeed this is the great Unhappiness of all those that place their Affections upon this World, that they will certainly fail of their Expectation; for either they will not be able to attain to that Condition of Life, which they

promis'd themselves so much Happiness in, or else they will not meet with that great Satisfaction therein which they expected from it.

Prov. xiii. 12. *And Hope deferred maketh the Heart sick,* as the *Wise Man* says.

It must needs be a great Vexation to a Man to miss of a thing after he has taken a great deal of Pains for it ; Or if he should obtain it, it will be yet a greater Vexation to find that it is not such a thing as he took it for, but that it has rather more Evil in it than Good. And such

Ecclef. i. 14. *are the all the things of this World; all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit,* as *Solomon* truly observes : They

promise much Satisfaction, but they yield none : And commonly they that have the most of this World have likewise the most Trouble.

He therefore is plainly the happiest Man who is *Poor in Spirit*, who sets not his Mind upon Vanity, upon things that will not satisfy ; Such an one is above the Reach of Fortune, and will be little concern'd how the World goes ; because, go it as it will, he has little Interest in it ; Much he expects not to gain, and much he can't lose : And being thus moderately affected towards this World, and knowing that Happiness can't be had here below, as he will not be much lifted up, so neither can he be much cast down or overwhelm'd with Grief, at any thing that happens to him here ; He will bear all Changes of Fortune with an even Mind and a contented Spirit. And this indeed is a great

great Felicity, to be able to bear well those Troubles which in a troublesome World it is impossible we should escape.

But the greatest Blessedness of such as have their Affections thus wean'd from this World is in Reversion; *Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* If we set our Affections on things above, and not on things of the Earth, and seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God, then when Christ who is our Life shall appear, we also shall appear with him in Glory, as the Apostle says, *Colos. iii. 1, 2.*

And to confirm and establish our Faith in the Truth of this Promise, it may be further consider'd, That such as these have a Title, not only by Promise, but likewise in Equity to the Happiness that is here promis'd. I mean this, that considering the Goodness of God, there seems to be a Congruity, a sort of Equity in it, that every Man should have his Portion of good things as well as of evil things, some time or other, here or hereafter, in this World or in the next. And this seems to be the Ground of that Answer which in the *Parable of the Rich*

Man and Lazarus, Abraham makes Luk. xvi. 25. to the Rich Man in Hell, when he had desired some Abatement of his Torment. *Son, says Abraham, remember that thou in thy Lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented.*

Forasmuch therefore as they, whether they be Rich or Poor, who are endued with this *Spirit of the Poor*, (having a Mind weaned from this World, and all the Enjoyments of Sense,) do not value much these worldly good things, nor place their Happiness therein; it seems congruous and agreeable, that they should have some other Happiness, which is more suited and adequate to their Desires, or else they would be in worse Condition and more unhappy than other Men. And such a Happiness there is provided for them, a Happiness pure and unmix'd, a Joy yielding full Satisfaction, as great as we can desire, and far greater than we can now conceive; *Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

VII. Lastly; Another Virtuous Disposition of Mind which Poverty of State, or a low Condition in the World, is naturally apt to work in Men, is a *pitiful and compassionate Temper.*

The Poor are liable to more Pains and Sufferings in the World than others; they are sometimes hungry and have nothing to eat, thirsty and have nothing to drink, are cold and have not Raiment enough to keep themselves warm, are pinch'd with the Weather, and have no House to shelter themselves in; these and the like Evils they have often been forc'd to suffer, and they know by Experience how hard it is to be without the Accommodations of Life; having therefore been in this disconsolate

late Condition themselves, they are naturally apt to have Compassion upon others when they see them in the like Condition; so that Compassion upon others in Distress may well be reckon'd one of the Virtues of Poverty, or a Virtue which Poverty is most apt to teach; and consequently, whoever is of a Compassionate Temper may be said to have the *Spirit of the Poor*.

But though this be a Virtue best taught by Poverty, it is what Men in all Conditions, the Rich as well as the Poor, are bound to learn and practise. For it is the Duty of all Men, as being all Members of the same Body, to have a fellow-feeling of the Sufferings of any other Part or Member of the Body. *Whether,* says the *Apostle*, *one Member*

1 Cor. xii. 26.

suffer, all the Members suffer with it; or one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoice with it. Now ye are the Body of Christ, and Members in particular. But though all are alike oblig'd to have Pity on others in Distress, all cannot make the like Expressions of their Pity. For they that are Poor themselves can only commiserate the Wants of other Poor, but it is not in their Power to relieve them; they can only *weep with those that weep*, but they can't ease them of their Sorrow; whereas the Rich have it in their Power to do well, as well as to wish well, to such as are in Want and Distress: It is their Part therefore not only to give good Words and good Wishes, but more substantial Comfort;

not

Jam. ii. 15. not only to say to a Brother or a Sister, that is naked and destitute of daily Food, Depart in Peace ; be ye warmed and filled ; but to give them those things which are needful for the Body.

And blessed are they who have this Spirit of the Poor ; that is, who are of such a pitiful and compassionate Temper as Poverty is apt to teach ; who, although in Prosperity themselves, are yet as ready to relieve the Wants and Necessities of others, as Men in the like Afflictions and Adversities would be, if they were able.

They are blessed even at present, for as our Saviour was used to say, *It is more blessed to give than to receive* ; there is certainly more Pleasure in doing Kindnesses than in Receiving them ; For the Pleasure of receiving a Kindness, is a Sensual Pleasure, consisting in the easing of that Pain which the Man was before in, and it is, (as all other Sensual Pleasures are) of short Continuance ; for a Man may be little the better now for a Kindness that was done him some while ago ; but the Pleasure of doing Good is chiefly a Pleasure of the Mind, procuring great Joy and Delight, not only at the Time when we do the Kindness, but whenever after we reflect upon what we have done.

They that are of this Pitiful and Compassionate Temper, and shew forth the same, as they have Ability and Opportunity, in Acts of Mercy and Charity, are also blessed at present, because they

they are entitled to the Blessing of God upon all that they take in hand, who does commonly, even in this Life render to them an hundred-fold in Temporal Blessings, for the Kindness which they shew to others in Distress. *Blessed is he*, says the Psal- Psal. xli. 1, 2, 3.

mist, that considereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of Trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon the Earth; and thou wilt not deliver him into the Will of his Enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the Bed of Languishing, thou wilt also make all his Bed in his Sickness. And He, says Solomon, Prov. xix. 17.
that bath Pity upon the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

But the chief Blessedness of these Poor in Spirit is also in Reversion; *Blessed* are they who have this Spirit of Poverty, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven: There are none so sure to receive Mercy from God at the great Day, as they who in this Life shew Mercy to others in Distress. *When the Son*

of Man shall come in his Glory, Mat. xxv. 31, &c.
—says our Saviour, before him

shall be gather'd all Nations — and he shall set the Sheep on his right Hand, and the Goats on his left; — and shall say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you from the Foundation of the World: For I was an hungred
and

and ye gave me Meat ; I was thirsty and ye gave me Drink ; I was a Stranger and ye took me in ; Naked and ye clothed me ; I was Sick and ye visited me ; I was in Prison and ye came unto me. — For inasmuch as ye have done these things to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done them unto me.

By this Account of the Proceedings at the great Day of Judgment, it should seem as if nothing would be then enquir'd into, but only whether we had this *Spirit of Poverty* ; that is, whether we have been Pitiful and Compassionate to the Poor and Needy, and others in Distress, and have been free and liberal in our Bounty towards them. But tho' this be not so, (for we are told in other Places, that *God will then bring every Work into Judgment*) yet I think it may be fairly argu'd from hence, That at the great Day of Reckoning, special Regard will be had to the Discharge of this Duty ; that tho' this alone will not be sufficient to entitle us to the Reward of Heaven, the Want of it alone will be sufficient to forfeit our

Title to it ; according to that of *Jam. ii. 13.* *St. James, He shall have Judgment without Mercy, who hath shewed no Mercy;* and that tho' this alone will not qualify us for the Kingdom of Heaven, it is one of the most necessary Qualifications for it.

I shall only add, for the Conclusion of all ; That altho' the Virtues and Graces before-mention'd, (and if there be any other of the

like

like Kind, which, because most readily learned, or most easily practis'd in a low Condition, may be call'd Virtues of Poverty) are, as has been shewn before, alike necessary to Men of all Conditions, in order to the rendring their Lives here easy, and to qualify them for the Kingdom of Heaven ; yet, when they are found in Persons of nobler Birth, of higher Quality, and of more plentiful Estates, they shine with greater Lustre, and so become more exemplary to the rest of the World : For which Reason, and especially because they are commonly with more Difficulty learn'd and exercis'd by such Persons than by Men of meaner Rank, as they are in them more excellent and Praise-worthy than in others, so, it may well be thought, they will also be rewarded with higher Degrees of Glory.

Thus, *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, or they who have the Spirit of Poverty, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Which Blessedness, that we may all attain,
GOD of his infinite Mercy grant, for
the Sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, to
whom with the Father and the Holy
Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now
and for ever. Amen.*

THE LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON

...the first of his works, and which he published in 1773. It was a small volume, but it was the first of a series of works which were to make his name known to the world. He was a man of great energy and industry, and he was not content with writing, but he was also a man of letters, and he was a man of great influence. He was a man of great energy and industry, and he was not content with writing, but he was also a man of letters, and he was a man of great influence. He was a man of great energy and industry, and he was not content with writing, but he was also a man of letters, and he was a man of great influence.

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S E R M O N II.

Preach'd before the

Q U E E N
A T

St. *J A M E S*'s,

N O V E M B E R the 9th, 1707.



ADVERTISEMENT.

*THE following Sermon being too long to be
preach'd at once, those Parts of it which
are thus enclosed [] were omitted when it
was preach'd before the QUEEN.*

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The Way of Trying Prophets.

I JOHN IV. I.

Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God : Because many false Prophets are gone out into the World.



AFTER that the *Christian Religion* had been sufficiently taught and prov'd by the Preaching and Miracles of our *Saviour* and his *Apostles*, it pleased God (for wise Reasons, no doubt) to permit great Opposition to be made to the Truth and Purity of it ; not only by its former professed Enemies, the *Jews* and *Heathens*, but likewise by some among the *Christians* themselves ; some, I mean, who overpower'd in a manner by that strong Evidence, whereby

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Christianity in general had been confirm'd, could not avoid Conviction, nor, with any Ease in their own Minds, decline the taking upon them the Name of *Christians* ; and yet, not liking nor relishing well that Submission and Obedience of the Understanding, and that Strictness of Life which it obliged them to, set themselves so to explain (that is, indeed, so to corrupt) the Faith of *Christ*, as to take away all that Mystery from its Articles of Belief which they could not well comprehend ; and all that Strictness and Severity from its Precepts, which, as laying an ungrateful Restraint upon their Lusts and Passions, they found it hard to bring themselves to comply with.

The first of this Kind that we meet with in Scripture, or Ecclesiastical History, was that Arch-Heretick *Simon Magus* ; but he was quickly followed by several others, his Disciples or Imitators ; some of whom we find taken notice of by *St. Paul*, and the other *Apostles*, in their *Epistles* ; and the Number of them was so increas'd before *St. John's* Death, who outliv'd all the other *Apostles*, that he says, in the latter Part of the Text, that there were then, *many false Prophets gone out into the World*. Upon which Observation, he very reasonably grounds the Caution and Advice which he gives, in the former Clause of it ; *Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God*.

‘ [And

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' [And if it was thus even in the *Apostles*
 ' Days, if even then, there were
 ' some (as St. Paul calls them) false 2 Cor. xi. 13.
 ' *Apostles, deceitful Workers, transforming*
 ' *themselves into the Apostles of Christ; 'tis no*
 ' wonder that it has been so in the Ages since,
 ' or that it is so now. Nay, indeed, this is
 ' what we had great Reason to expect; or ra-
 ' ther 'tis what we might be sure would be;
 ' because it had been expressly foretold long ago,
 ' by Prophets of unquestionable
 ' Authority. *There shall arise false* Mat. xxiv. 5.
 ' *Christs, and false Prophets, says* 24.
 ' *our Saviour, and many shall come in my*
 ' *Name, and shall deceive many. And, of*
 ' *your own selves also, says St.*
 ' *Paul, shall Men arise, speaking* Acts xx. 30.
 ' *perverse things, to draw away Disciples*
 ' *after them. And again, There must be also*
 ' *Heresies among you, that they*
 ' *which are approved may be made* 1 Cor. xi. 19.
 ' *manifest among you. And, as there were*
 ' *false Prophets among the Jews, says St.*
 ' *Peter, so shall there be false*
 ' *Teachers among you, who privily* 2 Pet. ii. 1.
 ' *shall bring in damnable Heresies, even deny-*
 ' *ing the Lord that bought them. And many*
 ' *shall follow their pernicious Ways.*

' And the Methods whereby these Seducers
 ' have endeavoured, and indeed with too great
 ' Success, to draw Men from the Truth of the

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‘ Gospel, have been various ; some have en-
 ‘ deavoured it, by forging and setting forth
 ‘ *Gospels* and *Epistles* under the venerable
 ‘ Names of the *Apostles*. This was an early
 ‘ Artifice ; but thanks be to God, it was, by
 ‘ the Care and Vigilance of the first *Christi-*
 ‘ *ans*, soon discover’d, and is now impracti-
 ‘ cable. Others have done it by corrupting
 ‘ their genuine Writings ; but this Fraud also
 ‘ has been seldom long undetected, and would
 ‘ in vain be now attempted any more. And
 ‘ others have endeavour’d the same by setting
 ‘ up Oral Tradition as a Rule of Faith, toge-
 ‘ ther with the Scripture, and as a necessary
 ‘ Supplement thereto ; and boldly affirming
 ‘ that all the Doctrines by them taught, which
 ‘ are not to be found in Scripture, have been
 ‘ deliver’d down to them from *Christ* and his
 ‘ *Apostles* this Way. But this Method of De-
 ‘ ceit has been likewise so fully laid open and
 ‘ confuted in the Learned Writings of the
 ‘ *Protestants* against the Corruptions of the
 ‘ Church of *Rome*, that, it may reasonably be
 ‘ hop’d, there is little or no Danger of our
 ‘ now being deceived thereby.

‘ Nevertheless, there are two other Methods
 ‘ of Deceit, which we are still, and always
 ‘ shall be, in Danger of ; the first is, of those
 ‘ who wrest and pervert the Sense of Scrip-
 ‘ ture, by a false Interpretation of it ; the
 ‘ other is, of those who pretend themselves to
 ‘ be

‘ be afresh inspir’d by God, in such Manner
‘ as the *Apostles* were.

‘ Against the former of which we may be
‘ in good Measure secur’d, by constant Read-
‘ ing, and diligent Study of the Holy Scrip-
‘ ture ; and treasuring up, and deeply impres-
‘ sing on our Minds, those great Truths of
‘ Religion, whether relating to Belief or Pra-
‘ ctice, which are there clearly taught ; and
‘ resolving to admit of no Interpretation of
‘ any more obscure or doubtful Texts (even
‘ tho’ we have not Skill or Learning enough
‘ to shew the Falsity of such Interpretation)
‘ whereby Countenance seems to be given to
‘ any Opinion that is not according to the
‘ Analogy of Faith, or to any Practice that is
‘ not agreeable to that Strictness and Purity of
‘ Life which the Holy Gospel every where
‘ enjoins.

‘ And how we may be secur’d against the
‘ other Method of Deceit, *viz.* that of those
‘ who falsely pretend to Inspiration, is what we
‘ are taught in the Text, and will be my Bu-
‘ siness to explain, and shew more at large in
‘ my following Discourse: *Beloved, believe not*
‘ *every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they*
‘ *are of God, because many false Prophets, are*
‘ *gone out into the World.*] *Many false Pro-*
‘ *phets, says he, are gone out, that is, many*
‘ *that falsely pretend to the Teaching of the Spi-*
‘ *rit. For they were such false Prophets as these,*

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which the *Apostle* seems to have had chiefly in his Mind ; and that I take to be the Reason why he calls them *Spirits*, as well as *Prophets*. *Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God.*

And this Caution and Advice can never be given unseasonably, because as there were *many such false Prophets* in the World in the *Apostles* Time, so there have been ever since, and probably ever will be while the World shall last. Every Age has afforded Plenty of such *Enthusiasts*, whose Fraud, or Madness, or Folly, has in due time been made manifest unto all Men. And yet the continual Discoveries of former Cheats of this Kind have not prov'd sufficient to discourage others from setting up the same Pretence to Inspiration, neither have they afforded to the People of following Times sufficient Caution to beware of the like Impostures.

For even now, after all the Experience ~~that~~ the World has already had in such Matters, there is a new Set of *Prophets* lately risen up among our selves ; and as the wildest *Enthusiasts* have had, so have these also their Followers.

Nevertheless I will not yet take upon me to say that these are *false Prophets* ; 'tis Time that must shew that ; and a very little Time, 'tis likely, will shew it sufficiently. [But, all that I affirm now is Matter of Fact, That they

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‘ they call themselves Prophets, that immediate
‘ Divine Inspiration is what they pretend to ;
‘ and that they say with great Confidence,
‘ that they are the *Messengers of the Lord of*
‘ *Hosts*, and that all the Discourses which they
‘ utter in their Extasies, are *the Oracles of God*,
‘ and *the Warnings of the Eternal Spirit*.

‘ And who can, now at first, be sure that
‘ they are not so ? For why may
‘ not God, *who at sundry times, and* Heb. i. 1.

‘ *in divers manners, spake in times past to our*
‘ *Fathers by the Prophets*, speak also in the like
‘ Sort to us their Children ? We, indeed, can
‘ see no Reason, why, after the full Revelation
‘ of the *Everlasting Gospel*, by our *Saviour*
‘ and his *Apostles*, there should be any new
‘ Revelations given, especially to such as do
‘ already receive, and profess to give entire
‘ Credit to, the *Gospel-Revelation*. But God’s

‘ *Thoughts are not always as our*
‘ *Thoughts*, and many Things may Isa. lv. 8.

‘ be requisite or necessary for some wise and
‘ great Purposes, which we, not knowing the
‘ Counsels and Designs of Providence, may
‘ not see any Reason for. And, as on the one
‘ Hand, if we should give Ear and Credit to
‘ these Persons, as to the Messengers of God,
‘ when indeed *the Lord has not sent them, nor*
‘ *spoken by them*, we may be led into such Mi-
‘ stakes as may prove fatal to us ; so, on the
‘ other Hand, if we should slight and reject
‘ their

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‘ their Warnings, when indeed *a Spirit or an Angel has spoken to them*, we may be found ‘ *to have fought against God.*] Whether therefore they be true, or whether they be false Prophets, which do now, or which may at any Time hereafter thus take upon them to speak to us in the Name of God ; ’tis very good and reasonable Advice which the *Apostle* here gives, in relation to them : *Believe not every Spirit ; but try the Spirits whether they are of God.*

I. *Believe not every Spirit.* And this first Part of the *Apostle’s* Advice, I take to imply in it these four Things.

1. *That we should not readily give any Ear at all to such as pretend to Inspiration.* Go not after them, nor follow them, says our Saviour. Indeed, to a very strong Proof of any Man’s Inspiration, if it be offer’d to us, if it be laid in our way, we ought to yield ; at least so far, as to be thereby put upon farther Enquiring into the Matter ; because we can’t be sure that God will not any more communicate his Will to Men, in such manner as he has formerly done, by the immediate Inspiration of his Holy Spirit. But I say, that if no such Evidence of Divine Inspiration be plainly laid before us, without our seeking, we shall not need to go out of our Way to seek for it ; because we have no Reason

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Reason at all to doubt, but that the Revelation of God's Will already made to us in the Holy Scripture, is abundantly sufficient for all those Purposes, for which a Divine Revelation might be expected, or could reasonably be desir'd. For this *Word of God*, we are told, is a *Lamp unto our Feet, and a Light unto our Path*. This we are assured, *is able to make us wise unto Salvation*; wiser than which we need not desire to be. This we are assur'd, is *profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, and for Instruction in Righteousness*; that is, for every good Purpose. This, we are assur'd, was given, *that the Man of God might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works*: And if it was given for this Purpose, there can be no Doubt but that it is sufficient for it. [' Or, without considering the Testimony that the Holy Scripture gives of its own Sufficiency, we might otherwise be satisfied that it is sufficient; because the Wisdom of God has not, that we know of, thought fit, in all the Ages since the *Apostles* Times, to make any other publick Revelation of his Will to Mankind.] And if the Holy Scripture, as rationally Interpreted, Explained, and Applied by the Pastors of the *Christian Church*, and the Preachers of the Gospel, has been sufficient to guide into the Way of Truth, and

Ps. cxix. 105.

2 Tim. iii. 15,

16.

17.

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and to bring to Eternal Life, all that have been saved in all this time, for Sixteen Hundred Years past ; we may rest assur'd, that it is still as sufficient for the same Purposes. And therefore having now all those Books of Holy Scripture in our Hands, which have always hitherto, since the *Apostles* Times, serv'd for the Instruction of the *Christian Church* ; and being also well furnish'd with Spiritual Guides and Pastors, regularly ordain'd, and lawfully commission'd to Explain and Preach to us the Doctrine of the Gospel ; with whom, in Blessing their Ministry, our *Saviour* has promis'd, that he will *always be present, even unto the End of the*

Matt. xxviii.
20.

World : As we see no need that there is of new Revelations, so we have no Reason to expect them. And therefore for us, who believe upon such good Grounds the Perfection of Scripture, as a Rule both of Faith and Manners, to *seek out* now for new Lights, would be just the same Folly, as it would be to search for a Candle to add Light to the Sun. But,

2. What I take to be farther implied in this first Branch of the *Apostle's* Advice, *Believe not every Spirit*, is this ; *That how confidently soever any Man may give out himself to be an inspir'd Prophet, we should not be forward to believe his Pretences.* And for this there is a very good Reason given in the Text it self, *viz. because many false Prophets are gone out into the World.* And if this was a good Reason then

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then to make Men very shy and cautious of admitting any Man's Pretence to Inspiration, it is much more so, now ; for then, when the *Apostle* gave this Advice, as there were *many false Prophets*, so, we are sure, there were many true Ones too. And [' as, when, of the Money that is current abroad, there is some good, as well as some counterfeit, he that takes Money by Tale only, may probably take some good, as well as some bad ; and by good Luck may take none but what is good ; whereas, when the Coin is generally corrupt, he must have almost the same good Luck if he ever receives any good ; so it is here : Then,] when there were *true*, as well as *false Apostles*, a Man that us'd no Caution might yet by very good Hap only fall into the Hands of a *true Apostle*. Whereas, ever since the *Apostles* Days, a like uncautious Man must have had the same good Hap not to fall into the Hands of a Seducer ; because, ever since the *Apostles* left the World, tho' every Age has produc'd a great many that have given out themselves to be Inspir'd, we are not sure there has been any one that has been really so ; and, as to far the greatest Part of them we have undeniable Evidence, that if they were Inspir'd at all, it was by an Evil Spirit, and not by the Holy Spirit of God. And therefore, having as yet no Inducement to think it is otherwise now than it has been for Sixteen Hundred Years past, nothing can be more reasonable than

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than the Caution which the *Apostle* here gives *not to be forward* to give Credit to any that shall now set up with the like Pretences. It is as much Favour as any new Prophet can now in Reason desire (considering what Ground we have to suspect an Imposture) that we should not condemn him unheard ; but to have any Inclination at all in his Favour ; to imagine or suppose it likely that he may be a true Prophet, before he has given any plain Evidence of a Divine Mission, is an Argument of such Weakness, Indiscretion, and Unwariness, as we should be asham'd of in any Matter of our Worldly Concerns, wherein there was the like Uncertainty ; or rather, wherein there was such great Probability of our being impos'd upon. And therefore,

3. Another Thing meant, as I suppose, to be imply'd in this first Part of the *Apostle's* Advice, *Believe not every Spirit*, is, *That we should never accept any Person whatsoever as Inspir'd, without his first giving good Proof of his Divine Inspiration.* What Proof, in this Case, is sufficient, and may be reasonably requir'd, I shall have Occasion to consider by and by. But very good and sufficient Proof, I say, is what we ought to Insist upon and Demand, before we give any Credit at all to any Man that pretends to Inspiration. Because, there being, as the *Apostle* here says, *many false Prophets in the World* ; that is, many that falsly pretend

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pretend to Inspiration ; 'tis possible, at least, 'tis as likely as not, that the Man that comes to us with this Pretence is an Impostor : Or if he be not ; yet, so long as he gives no Evidence of his Inspiration, we are guilty of no Fault in not receiving him as an Inspir'd Prophet ; for it can never be a Fault, not to believe without Reason ; and that's no Reason to us which does not appear. Nay indeed, supposing him to be really Inspir'd, yet, while he gives no Proof of his Inspiration, so far is our Refusing to receive him as an Inspir'd Prophet from being a Fault, that it is no more than we are bound in Duty to do ; we should be to blame if we receiv'd him ; we do well and wisely in rejecting him : For it would be just the same Rashness and Indiscretion in us (though perhaps it might not be attended with the like hurtful Consequences) to receive as an Inspir'd Prophet, a Man that is really Inspir'd, while as yet there is no Evidence appearing of his being so Inspir'd, as it would be to give Credit to an Impostor. And besides, it may also probably be a Mistake of much worse Consequence, to receive as an Inspired Prophet a Man that is not Inspired, than it would be not to receive as such, a Man that is really Inspir'd : For if we receive as an Inspir'd Prophet a Man that is not Inspir'd, we run a Hazard of being deceiv'd by him to our Eternal Ruin ; whereas, if for want of sufficient Evidence

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dence of Inspiration, we should not give Credit to a Man that is really Inspir'd, the only Hazard we seem to run, is, of not knowing some Truths which might be upon some Accounts useful to be known, but without the Knowledge of which we may do very well ; because the Holy Scripture alone, we are well assur'd, *is able to make us wise unto Salvation.*

4. Lastly : What must be still farther meant to be implied in this first Branch of the *Apostle's* Advice, *Believe not every Spirit*, is this, *That we should not ever take any Man's Word only for his being an Inspired Prophet.* The Reason is, because if we admit, as of sufficient Force to prove Inspiration, a Man's own Affirmation that he is inspir'd, we must *believe every Spirit*, directly contrary to the *Apostle's* Warning. For 'tis not to be suppos'd that any Man that is desirous to be taken for an Inspired Prophet, will ever be wanting in giving an ample Testimony to himself. [' Either therefore this Proof of ' Divine Inspiration must be wholly set aside ; ' or else, we must allow of it by whomsoever ' it is offer'd ; and whoever gives out himself ' to be a Prophet, must forthwith, without further Examination, be receiv'd as such.]

But upon these Terms, our Blessed *Saviour* himself, who was certainly sent by God, did not require or expect that Credit should be given to him. Nay, he expressly acknowledges, that

that if he had not given other Proof of his Divine Mission, his own Testimony, by it self, had not been credible. *If, says he, I bear witness of my self my witness is not true.* Joh. v. 31.

And yet the Matter which a Man witnesses concerning himself may be true, tho' *his witnessing* it be not alone a sufficient Proof of its Truth. *Tho' I bear* Joh. viii. 14. *Record of my self*, says our Saviour in another Place, *yet my Record is true, for I know whence I came.* Altho' therefore we are not to give entire Credit to any Man that confidently affirms his own Inspiration; for if we should do that we must believe every Impostor; yet if the Man that gives out himself to be inspir'd, be otherwise a Man of Probity, Honesty and Modesty; if he has always before been thought to have a clear Head and a sound Judgment, and was never known or suspected to be subject to Vapours and Whimfies; and if when he affirms his own Inspiration he does it in a grave and becoming Manner, and with all the Appearance that is possible of Truth, and Sincerity, and Self-Perswasion. And Lastly, if there be nothing in the Matter which he utters as by Divine Inspiration, that is Blasphemous, Impious, Wicked, unworthy of God, or apparently contrary to sound Doctrine; (in these Cases, I say) the Man's own constant Affirmation that he is inspir'd,

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spir'd, may very reasonably put us upon farther enquiring into the Matter, in order to the obtaining the fullest Satisfaction that we can about it.

And this leads me to Discourse of the second Branch of the *Apostle's* Advice in the Text, very fitly subjoyn'd to the former, *viz.*

II. *Try the Spirits whether they are of God.* For there being many false Prophets, or false Pretenders to Inspiration, in the World, 'tis not reasonable that we should, before, or without Trial, believe every Spirit. And yet, on the other side, being well assur'd that there have been formerly several that have been divinely inspir'd, and that have spoken as they were mov'd by the Holy Ghost; and being not absolutely certain, that there never will be any more such Persons; neither is it reasonable that we should immediately damn, as a Cheat and Impostor, every Man that gives out this Pretence, while as yet no Signs or Tokens of Imposture do appear; but the right and the wise way is to wait a while, e're we give Judgment, and before we either receive or reject, to try the Spirits whether they are of God.

But how, it may be ask'd, shall we try them? What Proof of any Man's being Inspir'd who pretends himself so, may reasonably be requir'd, or expected?

I answer in general, Such as other Prophets, formerly sent by God, have been enabled to give ; such as *Moses*, the Lawgiver of the *Jews*, and such as *Christ* and his *Apostles*, the first Preachers of the Gospel, did give. For every Man that pretends to teach as by Inspiration, takes upon him to be a special Ambassador sent from Heaven on some extraordinary Message : And no Man is ever receiv'd as an Ambassador till he shews his Credential Letters.

More particularly ; There are two Proofs of Divine Inspiration. One, or the other, or both, of which we may with good Reason demand of any Man that sets up with this Pretence ; [' Especially, in Case the Revelation he pretends to have had, be of publick Concern, ' and he requires in the Name of God that ' we should give him Credit :] And they are *Prophecy*, and *Miracles*.

1. *Prophecy*, or the foretelling Things to come. This way *Moses*, and *Christ* and his *Apostles*, made Proof of their Divine Mission. They foretold some Things that were not to be till many Years after, as well as others which were then shortly to come to pass ; and those too, Events not depending on the necessary working of Natural Causes, but only on the Pleasure of God, or the Will of free Agents : Which kind of Events, we have Reason to think, can't be foreknown by any but God, nor be certainly foretold but by Revela-

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Isaiah xli. 23.

tion from God. According to that of the Prophet, *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.*

But then this Proof of Divine Inspiration, tho' it be indeed as good as any that can be given, is a convincing Proof to those only who happen to live either at, or after, the Time when the Prophecy is fulfilled : It is no Proof at all, it is an Amusement only, to those who live but at the Time when the Prophecy is first given out. Because 'tis a Course of Time, which that Generation of Men may never live to see, that must shew whether the Thing foretold does come to pass or no, ' [and ' consequently, whether the Man that foretold it was a true or a false Prophet.] There is therefore,

2. Another Proof of Divine Inspiration that may with good Reason be expected and requir'd of any Man, at the very Time when he utters his pretended Divine Revelations ; and that is, *Miracles*. Thus *Moses* prov'd his Divine Mission to those to whom he was sent. And thus our *Saviour* and his *Apostles* prov'd their Divine Mission to those to whom they first preach'd the Gospel ; they did *the Works of God*, that is, such Works as could not be done but by the Power of God.

This therefore, I say, is what may now also be reasonably expected from those who do now
a-days

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a-days pretend to Inspiration, and declare that they are sent by God on an extraordinary Message to us. Let them, as *Moses* did, *turn the Water into Blood*, and the *Dust into Lice*; and *divide* the Channel of the *Sea*, so that Men may pass thro' it, as on dry Land: Or let them, as our *Saviour* and his *Apostles* did, with only a Word speaking, *heal the Sick*, cure the *Cripples*, give *Sight* to the *Blind*, *cast out Devils*, and *raise the Dead*: Or let them, as the *Apostles* did, speak with Understanding in *Languages* which they never learn'd; and then we shall have some Reason to listen to what they have to say to us; but till then we shall have none; till then we shall be blameless in not believing them, even tho' they be true Prophets; for even of himself our *Saviour* says, *If I had not done among them the Works that* John xv. 24.

none other Man did, they had not had Sin. And if the unbelieving *Jews* would not have been to blame in not believing *Christ*, unless he had prov'd his Divine Mission by Miracles; by the same Reason neither shall we be now to blame, if we hearken not to these new Prophets (even supposing them to be true Prophets) unless they also give the like Proof of their Divine Mission. And of himself, whom yet, most certainly, *the Father had sanctify'd and sent into the World,* John x. 37.

he says again, *If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not.* And if He, *the Son of God*, was not to be believ'd upon other Terms

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than his working of Miracles, much less is any other Man. In not believing therefore these new Pretenders to Revelation, unless they shall also work Miracles to prove their Mission, 'tis plain we are safe ; but if we should believe them, we know not what Hazard we may run of being deceiv'd by them.

‘ [And by the same Reason that we believe
 ‘ their confident Pretence to Revelation, upon
 ‘ their own Testimony only, without Miracles;
 ‘ we must believe the like Pretence of any
 ‘ other Persons that shall ever come to us with
 ‘ the like Confidence ; that is, we must give up
 ‘ our selves to be deluded by every Impostor.]

But perhaps it will be said, That however there might be need of Miracles to prove the Divine Mission of *Moses*, because 'twas a *New Law* which God gave to the *Jews* by him ; and of our *Saviour* and his *Apostles*, because the Matter of their Revelation was likewise, in great measure, *new* ; and, not only so, but did also, in part, abolish the Law that had been before given by *Moses* ; yet there is not the same Reason to require or expect Miracles from those, who tho' they pretend to Inspiration, yet do not profess to be Authors of a new Revelation, or Preachers of another Gospel ; because a Revelation that has been once well confirm'd by Miracles, shall not need to be so confirm'd again ; at least, not to such as believe the History of those Miracles whereby it was formerly confirm'd.

And

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And this indeed is true : But then I say likewise, that as there is no need of Miracles to prove the Truth of a Revelation which has been already well prov'd by Miracles, and which by credible History we are assured has been so confirm'd ; so neither is there any need of fresh Inspiration for the teaching of a Doctrine which has been already fully taught by Persons divinely inspired, by Persons whose Divine Inspiration is acknowledged ; and who, tho' they be gone from us, do yet continue to Preach to us by those Writings which they have left behind them ; and will continue to do so, for so long as these their Writings shall continue in the World.

And this is now the Case with us ; our *Saviour*, who, we are sure, came from God, preaches to us now, as much as he did once to the *Jews*, tho' in another Manner, in those Sermons of his which are recorded by the Holy *Evangelists* : And the *Apostles*, who were commissioned by our *Saviour* to preach his Gospel, do still preach it, and will ever be preaching it to us, as long as those Books and *Epistles*, which they left behind them, shall continue in the World, and be known to be theirs ; and these Holy Scriptures have been sufficient for the Instruction of all *Christians* hitherto, ever since the *Apostles* Days. What need then is there of new Inspiration, if there be no new Matter to be taught ? Or what needs any Man

pretend to Inspiration, while, by his own Confession, he preaches no other Doctrine than is already taught in that Holy Scripture, which all those whom he speaks to, do already acknowledge was *given by Inspiration of God* ?

But supposing that the Thing is really so as they give out, *viz.* That they are indeed afresh inspir'd by God with the Knowledge of those same Truths which are contained in Scripture ; yet itill we are safe in not hearkning to them, as to Prophets and Inspired Persons, and in not receiving what they utter, as Matter lately reveal'd to them ; at least, not till they shall give good Evidence of their Divine Mission ; because we do already receive, upon the Testimony of the Holy Scripture, all that which they pretend to teach, as by new and fresh Inspiration. And if we do receive, as a Divine Truth, and as divinely reveal'd, any Doctrine or Prophecy which is indeed such ; what matters it whether we receive it from this Prophet or from that ? From an Old Prophet, or a New One ? From a Divine Revelation that was made Seventeen Hundred Years ago, or from one that was made but Yesterday ?

‘ [In a word therefore : The Doctrine,
 ‘ whatever it is, of those pretended Prophets,
 ‘ is either Old or New ; it is either the Do-
 ‘ ctrine of the Gospel, or it is another Go-
 ‘ spel ; let themselves say which it is. For if
 ‘ they shall say the First, *viz.* that their Do-
 ‘ ctrine

‘ Strine is no other than the Doctrine of the Go-
‘ spel. To what Purpose then, we may well ask,
‘ do you pretend, or with what Truth can you
‘ pretend, that you are taught it now by im-
‘ mediate Divine Inspiration ; when, by your
‘ own Acknowledgment, you were taught it
‘ before, and we may all of us learn the same
‘ from the long-ago divinely inspir’d Scrip-
‘ ture ? But if they shall say the other, *viz.*
‘ that the Matter which they are inspir’d with
‘ is New, and what we could not have learn’d
‘ from the Scripture ; we may then (as was
‘ said before) very reasonably require of them
‘ to give such Proof of their Inspiration and
‘ Mission, by Signs and Wonders and mighty
‘ Works, as our *Saviour* and his *Apostles*, and
‘ all that have hitherto been sent by God to
‘ publish a new Revelation to the World, have
‘ given ; till when, we shall have no Reason
‘ to hearken to them at all ; and if we do, it
‘ will be at our great Peril.]

But if they shall say, (and that’s indeed all
that I think they can with any Appearance of
Reason farther pretend,) that the Revelations
now made to them are partly Old, and partly
New ; inasmuch as, tho’ what they now utter
as Divine Oracles, be not in Substance New,
because ’tis no other than what is really and
truly contain’d in Scripture ; ’tis nevertheless
what would not, what perhaps could not, have
been discern’d to be therein contain’d, without
fresh

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fresh Illumination ; and that they are now enlightened with a clearer Knowledge of some Truths contain'd in Scripture than any others yet have been ; that they are by special Inspiration of the Spirit, enabled to open the Book that has been always hitherto seal'd up, and to give the true Sense of several dark and obscure Passages in Scripture, the Meaning whereof has not hitherto been apprehended, or which have been grossly misunderstood by all former Interpreters, and would perhaps never have been rightly understood but by Inspiration.

In this Case, if this be what they say, there is one Thing however that we may very reasonably require and demand of them, before we give them Credit, *viz.* That they should make out to us, by Reason, the Truth of that Interpretation of Scripture, which they say they have been taught by Revelation ; and if they can and shall do this, we'll readily receive their Interpretation, even tho' we should not believe them to be inspired.

And this is no unreasonable Demand ; because a true Interpretation of a Text of Scripture, tho' it be supposed to be such an one as a Man could not have hit upon only by the working of his own Reason, yet when it is found out, may be capable of being made plain to others, by Reasoning and Argumentation.

We

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We have an Instance of this in the Preaching of the *Apostles* ; They, by the Illumination of the *Holy Spirit*, were directed to, and instructed in the Meaning of all those Passages in the *Old Testament*, whether Types, or Prophecies, which related to the *Messias* ; which, without such Illumination they would not have understood : But then, after that they themselves were let into the Knowledge of them this way, they were able by Reasoning to make plain to others the Truth of their Interpretation of those Places, and to shew how exactly applicable they were to, and how punctually they were fulfill'd in our *Saviour Christ*. This may be observ'd in almost all those Sermons of the *Apostles* which are related in the History of their *Acts*, and likewise in all their *Epistles*.

And of St. Paul in particular it is observ'd, that entring into a Synagogue of the *Jews*, *he reason'd with them* Acts xvii. 2, 3.
out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging that Christ must needs have suffer'd, and risen again from the Dead ; and that that Jesus whom he preach'd unto them, was Christ. And of the same *Apostle* it is noted in *Acts* ix. 22. that immediately after his own miraculous Conversion, before he had conferr'd with any of the *Apostles*, or heard any of their Sermons, when therefore the good Understanding which he himself had in Scripture, must have been chiefly, if not only, from Divine Illumination,
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he confounded the *Jews* which dwelt at *Damascus*, proving that *Jesus* was the *Christ*. But now how could he prove this, so as to confound and silence the *Jews*, but only by out-reasoning them in the Interpretation that he gave of the Prophecies of the *Old Testament* which had foretold the *Messias*? And it may indeed be difficult to find out the true Key to some ancient Prophecy; but when that is once found out, whether by Study or Divine Illumination, it may be easy enough afterwards, by the Help of that Key, to lay the whole Prophecy open, and to make the Interpretation of it clear even to an ordinary Capacity. Let therefore, as I said, our *New Prophets* do thus, and then, without enquiring how they came by their Knowledge, we will readily admit their Interpretation of Scripture.

But if they can't do this, if they can't shew that the Interpretation which they give of Scripture is rational, and the Application which they make of it just and agreeable; we must then come upon them again with our former Demand, and require of them to demonstrate the Truth of their Interpretation, and the Justness of their Application of Scripture, and likewise their own Truth, in pretending to have receiv'd this Knowledge from the *holy Spirit*, by their working Miracles. For to give such a Sense of Scripture as true, which can't be made out to be true by a rational Interpretation,

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tion, is all one, in Effect, as to give out a new Scripture ; and we can't, with good Reason, receive any Discourse or Writing as Scripture, (even tho' it be not contradictory to any former Revelation) upon less Evidence than that upon which we acknowledge the Divine Inspiration of that Holy Scripture which we have already receiv'd.

And this Proof of Inspiration by Miracles, is indeed what may now with more Reason be demanded of our *New Prophets*, than it could have been of our *Saviour Christ*, or of the *Holy Apostles*.

For the coming of *Christ*, as a Prophet and a Lawgiver, had been long before foretold by former Prophets, particularly by

Moses, *A Prophet shall the Lord* Deut. xviii. 15.

your God raise up unto you, of your Brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. So that though our *Saviour* had wrought no Miracles, yet his Pretence to a Divine Mission had been very credible, because from former Prophecies, the *Jews* had good Reason, just at that Time, to expect such a Prophet as our *Saviour* gave out himself to be. And he himself argu'd sometimes with the *Jews* upon this

Foot, *Search the Scriptures, for* John v. 39.
they are they which testify of me.

And so likewise our *Saviour*, after that his own Divine Mission had been well prov'd and confirm'd,

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confirm'd, promis'd and foretold that his *Apo-*
stles, whom he would commission to preach his

Gospel after his Ascension, should
John xvi. 13. be *guided* by the Holy Spirit *into*
all Truth ; so that if they in their own Persons
had wrought no Miracles in Proof of their In-
spiration, their Pretence to Inspiration had ne-
vertheless been well and fully enough ground-
ed upon and prov'd by our Lord's Promise and
Prediction.

But what Promise in Scripture, what Pre-
diction of *Christ* or his *Apostles*, or of any an-
cient *Prophets*, can our *new Prophets* produce
foretelling *their* coming, and assuring us of
their Inspiration ? We have many Predictions
in Scripture, that *false Christs* and *false Pro-*
phets should *arise*, and *deceive many* ; but we
have none, that I know of, foretelling that any
should speak or write by immediate Inspiration
of the Spirit, after that the Holy *Apostles*
should have left the World ; having first com-
mitted to Writing all such Things as the Spirit
of God had dictated to them, and commanded
them to write. We have no Prophecy of
Scripture, that I know of, foretelling, that in
After-Ages God would raise up other Prophets
like unto them, to whom he would communi-
cate his Will in such Manner as he had done
to them, by immediate Inspiration of the *Holy*
Spirit. So that the Pretence of our *new Pro-*
phets to such Inspiration, being not founded on
Scripture,

Scripture, must fall to the Ground, unless it be supported by Miracles, there being plainly no other Foundation to rest it sufficiently upon.

Well ! But you'll say then, What if these Men should now give such Proof of their Inspiration as we may reasonably require ? What if their Predictions should come to pass ? Or what if they should do Miracles ?

I answer ; When this shall be, 'twill be soon enough to resolve that Question ; but till then we shall not need to trouble our selves about it. And yet to say somewhat briefly to it now may not be amiss ; because it may well be suppos'd, that a Man that already counterfeits Revelations, will not be long before he'll set upon counterfeiting Prophecies or Miracles : I mean whenever he shall have a convenient Opportunity, and shall find his Followers and Admirers in a good Disposition to be deluded ; and the Devil, we may be sure, whose Interest is highly serv'd by such Delusions, will not be wanting to lend his utmost Assistance towards carrying on the Cheat.

1. Then, let it be suppos'd, that they foretell Things to come ; that is, that some Things which they foretell do come to pass ; (I mean presently, or within a short time, for if the Accomplishment of their Predictions be not till a long while hence, it may serve for an Argument to our Posterity of such Men's Inspiration ;

tion ; but it can be none to us. In this Case, I say) one Thing to be consider'd by us, is the Nature of the Event that was foretold ; because if it was a Thing that was produc'd by the working of Natural Causes, the foretelling it was not a certain Proof of Divine Inspiration ; for the Devil is without doubt a better Natural Philosopher than any Man, and so may foresee, and may inspire his Emissaries to foretell several Events of this Kind, which no Mortal Man by his own Wit and Skill only, could have foretold. And the only Things, which (as I suppose) none but God can foreknow, are such Events as depend upon the working of the Will of some free Agent.

And again, even of these Events, commonly call'd future Contingencies, several, it may well be suppos'd, are already foretold in some dark Prophecies of the Holy Scripture, which though not understood by us, may yet be understood by the *Devil* ; who, if not naturally of greater Wit, must yet needs, by his longer Observation, Experience and Study, have attained to much greater Skill in such Matters than any short-liv'd Man can do. So that a true Interpretation of some Scripture-Prophecies which have not hitherto been understood by Man, may possibly be had from the *Devil*, and consequently, is not a sure Proof of Divine Illumination.

Again ;

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Again ; If the Events that have been foretold by any pretended Prophet, are such, the Foreknowledge whereof (even by the *Devil* himself) can't be accounted for either of these Ways, some Consideration is then to be had of their Number. For when God endues any Man with the Spirit of Prophecy in order to his gaining Belief to some Messages of publick Concern which God has charg'd him with, it can't be suppos'd but that he will enable him to give full and sufficient Proof of his Divine Mission ; and a full and sufficient Proof thereof (in case no other Proof of any other Kind but only by Prophecy, be given of it) can hardly be given, but by a Man's truly foretelling a great many future Events.

And yet, lastly, If a Man should truly foretell a great many future Events, even this would not be a good Proof of Divine Inspiration, in case any One (tho' but One only) of his Predictions should fail to be accomplished in its Time. For a wise and cunning Being, (such as the *Devil*, that *old Serpent*, certainly is) may, by a probable Conjecture only, foretell several future Contingencies, and may rarely be out in his Guess ; so that a Man may be only an Emissary or Instrument of the *Devil*, who does truly foretell some such Things ; and it is certain he is no other, in case there be a Failure in any one of those Predictions which

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he gives forth as by Divine Inspiration ; because the Spirit of God, which searcheth all Things, and *understands* even the *Thoughts* of Men *long before*, cannot be deceived in any Thing. And this Rule is plainly given in the

Scripture it self. *And if thou say*
Deut. xxi. 22. *in thy heart, How shall we know*
the word which the Lord hath not spoken
When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the
Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass
that is the thing which the Lord hath not
spoken ; but the Prophet hath spoken it pre-
sumptuously. But,

2. Let it be farther suppos'd, that a Man now pretending to Inspiration seems also to do Miracles ; 'tis to be remembred, that it is fore
2 Thess. ii. 9. *told, that the coming of the Man*
of Sin, the Son of Perdition, is
after the working of Satan, with all power
and signs, and lying wonders. So, that the
true Miracles are undoubtedly a good, perhaps
the best, and for the present the most convinc-
ing Evidence of Divine Inspiration, yet there
is in this Case great room for Deceit, and con-
sequently great need of Caution. Two Things
especially, there are, in this Case, needful to
be carefully enquir'd into ;

First, the Truth of the Fact. We should be well assur'd that the wonderful Thing said to be done, was really done ; and for this Purpose it may be requir'd, that it should be done either

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either in our own Sight and Presence, or in the Sight and Presence of *many* other credible Persons ; *several* of whom should (without any Contradiction from any other Persons that were then present) testify the same, as a Matter of their own certain Knowledge.

And when we shall have received this Satisfaction as to the Fact, it will be then farther needful to be strictly enquir'd into, whether it was a true Miracle, that is, whether it was an Operation plainly exceeding the known Power of Natural Causes, and of Evil Spirits ; as 'tis evident most of the Miracles of *Moses*, and our Blessed Saviour were. [' Exceeding, ' I say, the known Power of *evil Spirits*, as ' well as of *natural Causes* ; and how great ' *their* Power is, we can hardly certainly ' know ; only we may very reasonably think, that *the Prince of* Eph. ii. 2. ' *the Power of the Air*, as the *Devil* is call'd ' in Scripture, is able to do far greater Things ' than any that as yet have been so much as ' reported to have been done by our *new Prophets*.]

Well, but you'll say, Supposing that thus far also we should receive all the Satisfaction that we can reasonably desire ; that is, that the wondrous Work which we are fully persuaded was done by some pretended Prophet, after the best Trial and Examination that we can make of it, does appear to be Miraculous ; may we

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then reasonably give Ear to what the Man has to say to us ?

Yes truly, I think we may ; nay indeed, I think we shall be to blame if we do not. But yet, I do not say, that immediately upon this we ought to receive, as a Divine Oracle, every Thing that this Man shall utter. If, says

Deut. xiii. 1.

Moses, there arise among you a Prophet or a Dreamer of Dreams, and giveth thee a Sign or a Wonder, and the Sign or the Wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them : Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, or that Dreamer of Dreams ; for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul.

Mat. xxiv. 24.

And our Saviour himself tells us, That there shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

But what's then to be done ? If false Prophets may give the same Tokens, to appearance, of a Divine Mission, that true Prophets have done, how shall we do to know certainly which are true, and which are false ?

I answer, Even in this Case (which yet we may well think does very rarely happen) there is one other Method of trying the Spirits, whether

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whether they are of God, which we may be certain will not fail or deceive us ; and that is, by their Doctrines : What therefore we should have to do, if ever we should meet with such an appearing Evidence of any Man's Inspiration, as we could not after the strictest Search discern any Fraud in, would be to Examine well the Nature of those Doctrines which he teaches as by God's Command and Authority, and to observe whether they be *according to Godliness*, whether they be worthy of God. And if they are not so, we ought not either to receive the Doctrines, or to accept the Man as a Prophet, no not even upon the strongest Evidence that can be given of Inspiration ; because it is a Contradiction to the Truth and Holiness of God, that he should ever commission any Man to teach any Doctrine, contrary to Truth or Holiness. For

2 Tim. ii. 13.

He abideth faithful, as the Apostle says, *he cannot deny himself* ; and it would be to deny himself, to Commission any Man either to withdraw his Creatures from their due Obedience to him ; or to invalidate the Credit of former Divine Revelations ; or to teach any Doctrine derogating from his Eternal and Essential Attributes, his Justice, Holiness, Goodness or Truth ; or to set up other Gods ; or to entice Men to Idolatry , or to prescribe, or so much as to give License or any Encouragement to Impiety, Prophaneness, Falshood, Lying, Perjury,

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jury, Deceit, Injustice, Uncleaness, Intemperance, or any Moral Wickedness. And therefore, our Saviour, in *Matth. vii. 16.* immediately after he had given a Caution to *be-ware of false Prophets*, adds these Words, *Ye shall know them by their Fruits*, that is, by the Fruits of their Doctrines; by the Nature and Tendency of them; so that whatever Appea-

2 Cor. xi. 13, 14. rance a Man may make of Honesty, [*For Satan himself is transform'd into an Angel of Light*;

therefore it is no great thing if his Ministers also be transform'd as the Ministers of Righteousness,] or what Proof soever he may give of his Truth, or what Evidence soever of Divine Inspiration; we may be most certain that he is not a Messenger from God, if the Matter of his Doctrine be contrary either to the Principles of Natural Religion, or to the Eternal Laws of Reason, or to the Truth of a

Gal. i. 8, 9. former Divine Revelation. *If we, says St. Paul, or any Man, or even an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, and which ye have receiv'd, let him be accursed.*

Thus we are to try the Spirits whether they are of God; which, if we do sincerely, and with true Love to God and Truth, the blessed Consequence will be, that, how much soever

false

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false Prophets do abound, and however evil Men and Seducers may wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, we shall be aware of their Devices; and being not like Children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of Man, and cunning Craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, shall hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering; and continue in the Things we have been taught, knowing of whom we have learn'd them; and be stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.

2 Tim. iii. 13.

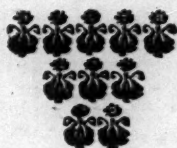
Eph. iv. 14.

Heb. x. 23.

2 Tim. iii. 14.

1 Cor. xv. 51.

Which God grant, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. To whom, &c.



Which God grant for the sake of our Lord
Jesus Christ. To whom, &c.



S E R M O N III.

Preach'd before the Honourable
H O U S E of P E E R S,
I N T H E
Abbey-Church at W E S T M I N S T E R,
On J A N U A R Y the 31st, 1708.





S E R M O N . III.

Preached before the Honourable

H O U S E . O F P E E R S .

I N T H E

Abbey-Church at Westminster,

On JANUARY the 31st. 1708.





Of Children's Bearing the Iniquities of their Fathers.

L A M E N T. V. 7.

*Our Fathers have sinned, and are not,
and we have born their Iniquities.*

T H E Title of this Book, call'd *The Lamentations of Jeremiah*, declares its Author ; and the Subject or Matter of it sufficiently shews upon what Occasion it was written ; viz. either the Death of *Josiah*, or the Destruction of *Jerusalem* ; or both.

For that it was written upon Occasion of *Josiah's* Death, is probably argu'd from what we read in 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 25. And *Jeremiah* lamented for *Josiah* ; and all the singing men and singing women spake of *Josiah* in their
Lamen-

Lamentations to this Day, and made them an Ordinance in Israel; and behold they are written in the Lamentations.

But that it was written upon Occasion of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Captivity in *Babylon*, is, I think, still more probably argued, from that Preface or Introduction to this Book, which (tho' not in the *Hebrew*) we meet with in the *Greek Translation* thereof by the *Seventy*, in these Words; " And it came to pass, that after *Israel* was carried Captive, " and *Jerusalem* destroy'd, *Jeremiah* sat down " weeping; and lamented, or utter'd forth, " this Lamentation upon *Jerusalem*, and " said ", *How doth the City sit sorrowful, &c.*

But it may be, and indeed I think it the most probable Opinion of all, that the Book (as it now is) was written upon both these Occasions; I mean, that upon the Death of good King *Josiah*, which happen'd some Years before the Captivity, *Jeremiah* did lament for *him*, in some such Words as we now meet with in this Book: But that afterwards, upon the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the carrying of the People Captive into *Babylon*, he review'd his former Mournful Song, and added thereto, and intermingled therewith, some other Passages that were more peculiarly expressive of those sad Calamities.

The Book it self consists of two principal Parts ; the first, contain'd in the four first Chapters, is chiefly a sorrowful Description of the miserable Condition of the *Jews*, by the Loss of such an excellent King, by the Ruin and Destruction of their City and Kingdom, and by their own Slavery in *Babylon*. The other Part, comprehended in this 5th Chapter, is a Prayer to G O D for Deliverance from that sore Affliction which they were then under ; wherein to move G O D to Compassion, their sad and miserable State is again set forth, and humbly represented to him.

The Words I am now to discourse of are a Part of this Prayer. And, as such, they may be taken and understood three Ways.

I. As a simple Affirmation of a Matter of Fact ; *Our Fathers have sinned and are not, and we have born their Iniquity.*

II. As a Complaint, or an Expostulation with God about it ; as if it had been said, “ Why is this ; or what Justice or Reason is there in it, that we should be punish'd for our Father's Sins ? Or,

III. Lastly ; As a Petition to G O D, that it might be so no longer, but that this Entail of Punishment might be now cut off.

And accordingly, in my Discourse on the Words, I shall do these three Things :

78 Of Children's Bearing the

1. I shall prove the Matter of Fact ; *Viz.* That G O D does sometimes make the Children bear the Sins of the Fathers.

2. I shall shew that this Method of G O D's dealing with sinful Men is not to be complain'd of as unjust. And

3. Lastly, I shall shew, that it is nevertheless a proper Matter of Petition or Prayer to G O D, That he would be pleas'd to cut off this Entail of Punishment, and *not remember against us the Iniquities of our Fathers.*

And in the handling of each of these Heads, I shall have a particular Respect to that which is the Occasion of this Day's Humiliation and Fasting.

I. I shall prove the Matter of Fact ; *Viz.* That G O D does sometimes make the Children bear the Sins of the Fathers. *Our Fathers have sinned — and we have born their Iniquities.*

And for the Proof of this we should need to look no farther than to that very Case which the Text refers to ; *Viz.* the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Captivity of the *Jews* in *Babylon* ; which came not to pass till about Threescore Years, or more, after that wicked Part of *Manasseh's* Reign, whereby G O D had been provoked, and upon which he had determin'd to inflict this heavy Judgment upon them.

2 Kings xxiii.
26, 27.

But

Iniquities of their Fathers. 79

But this is not the only Instance of this kind that the Scripture furnishes us with. For, for the Idolatry of *Abab*, his whole Family was cut off; for the Sin of *Saul* in killing the *Gibeonites*, the Kingdom after his Death was plagued with Three Years Famine, Year after Year, in the Reign of *David*; and the same Sin was again most severely punished in *Saul's* own Family, when it could not be expiated, nor the Plague that was thereby occasioned be removed, but by the hanging up of Seven of his Issue.

2 Kings x. 11.

2 Sam. xxi. 1.

ver. 9. 14.

And it was for the Sin of *Eli*, and his Sons, that his whole Posterity was depriv'd of the Priesthood, and that all the Increase of his House died in the Flower of their Age.

1 Sam. ii. 33.

And what need I add more? For we may see with our own Eyes a standing Example of this in the whole Nation of the *Jews*, a People once belov'd by G O D, and highly favour'd above all other Nations; but they, when they crucified the Lord of Life and Glory, said, *His Blood be*

Mat. xxvii. 25.

on us, and on our Children: And so it has been ever since: For from that Time to this, they have never been in such a flourishing Condition as before. It was not many Years after, that their City and Temple and Common-wealth were entirely destroy'd, and their whole Nation dispersed; ever since which they have wander'd

wander'd about the World as Vagabonds, every where hated and despis'd, and in some Places and Ages most miserably butcher'd and slaughter'd ; so that if one should add together the prodigious Numbers of them that have been massacred in several Ages and Countries, chiefly in and soon after the Siege and Destruction of *Jerusalem*, one would think it hardly possible that any of them should be remaining ; and yet still they do remain, and in great Numbers too, some of them in almost every Country in the World, and every where unmix'd with other People, to be, as it were, living Monuments of G O D's heavy Displeasure.

Or, we may, if we will, see still a greater Example of this Entail of Punishment in our selves ; I mean in the whole Race of Mankind ; upon all whom there is (as we see and feel by our own sad Experience) entail'd a Curse, and a Disease, for the Transgression of our first Parents ; for 'tis to that we all now owe our present Misery and Mortality. *By one Man Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin ; and so Death passed upon all Men.*

Rom. v. 12.

And lastly, If we reflect upon that which is the Occasion of our now humbling our selves before God, *viz.* the barbarous Murder of King CHARLES I. of Blessed Memory, by his own Subjects, the People of this Land, and the Rebellion

bellion which preceeded it, I believe we may think that we also have some Reason to say with the *Jews* in the Text, *Our Fathers have sinned and are not, and we have born their Iniquities*: For well may those Evils and Calamities be thought to be sent upon the Nation for that Sin, which have been in natural Consequence the Fruits of it.

And such were, plainly, those many Years of Misery, of Anarchy or Tyranny, and of great Confusion, which immediately follow'd; and which continued until the Happy Restauration of King CHARLES II. During which Time we might have taken up and applied to our selves a considerable Part of this Book of the *Lamentations*; We might have said, as the Prophet here does; *How hath the Lord afflicted Zion for the Multitude of her Transgressions? From the Daughter of Zion all her Beauty is departed;*

Chap. i. V. 5, 6.

Her Princes are become like Harts that find no Pasture; they are gone without Strength before the Pursuer. How hath the Lord cover'd the Daughter of Zion with a Cloud in his Anger, and cast down from Heaven to the Earth the Beauty of Israel, and remembered not his Footstool in the Day of his Anger? Her King, and her Princes were among the Gentiles;

Chap. i. V. 1.

9.

The Law was no more; the Prophets also found

no Vision from the Lord. The El-
 10. ders sat upon the Ground and kept
 Silence, they cast Dust upon their Heads, and
 cover'd themselves with Sackcloth.

15. All they that went by clapp'd their
 Hands at her; they kissed and wagged their
 Head, saying, Is this the City that Men called
 the Perfection of Beauty, the Joy of the whole

16. Earth? All her Enemies also open'd
 their Mouth against her, and said,
 We have swallow'd her up; certainly, this is
 the Day that we looked for; we have found,
 we have seen it. The Priests and

20, the Prophets were slain in the San-
 21. ctuary of the Lord; The young
 and the old lay on the Ground in the Streets;
 the Virgins and the Young Men fell by the
 Sword. They that were brought
 Ch. iv. V. 5. up in Scarlet did embrace Dung-
 hills. The Adversary and the E-

12. nemy entred into the Gates of Je-
 13. rusalem; they shed the Blood of
 the Just in the midst of her. Also
 20. the Breath of our Nostrils, the
 Anointed of the Lord was taken in
 their Pits; of whom we said, Under his shadow
 we shall be safe. Then was our

Ch. v. V. 2. Inheritance turned to Strangers,
 4. and our Houses to Aliens; We
 drank our Water for Money, and our Wood
 was

*was sold unto us. Our Necks
were under Persecution; we la-
bour'd and had no rest. Servants
also did rule over us; and there was none to
deliver us out of their Hand.*

5.

8.

But from their Hand (God be thanked) we have now for many Years been deliver'd: By the Wonderful and most Providential Restauration of King CHARLES II. to his just Rights, we also were restored to our ancient Government both in Church and State, and to the publick and free Profession of the true Religion, together with our former Peace and Prosperity.

And yet, for all this, I doubt I may truly say, that we do even still in some Measure bear that Iniquity of our Fathers which we this Day desire to be humbled for.

For if we look back to the Times past, it will be easy to discern, that even the War which we are at this time engag'd in, had its first Ground in the Wickedness of this Day. For when the Father was cut off, and his Throne and Power usurp'd, the young Princes were forc'd to wander where they could find a Place: And there, in the Court of a Neighbouring King, they might easily learn (there, one of them, we are too sure, did learn) Customs and Manners, both in Government and Religion, clearly different from those which had been here receiv'd and establish'd.

And such Diligence (we well remember) was us'd, and such Progress made, during a short Reign of less than Four Years, in endeavouring to bring in the same Customs and Manners among us, that if that Reign had continued much longer, we must (unavoidably, to all Appearance) have been brought under very great Bondage, both Spiritual and Temporal. But it pleased God, of his Goodness, to cut short those Days, so that our Enemies had not Time enough to accomplish their wicked Designs ; it pleased him, I say, by a wonderful Deliverance, such as could not have been look'd for, to preserve to us then our Rights, Properties and Religion : Upon which we might have said, in the Words of the *Psalmist*, *Our Soul is escaped as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler ; the Snare is broken, and we are delivered.* But however, tho' God was graciously pleas'd not then to punish us so much as he seem'd to threaten he would do, and as we were afraid he would have done ; he was not so far reconcil'd to us as to forgive our Sin wholly, and suffer us to go altogether unpunished ; but when he removed one Judgment, sent another in its Room. So that tho' it may (I hope truly) be said, that we are now made whole of that Disease, of which before we were sick almost to Death ; it must nevertheless be granted, that even the Remedy by which we were cured, and by the Use
whereof

whereof we are still preserv'd in Health, tho' not so bad as the Disease, yet has been, and still is, very painful and afflicting. For there was no way to keep out Popery and Slavery then pressing hard upon us, but by engaging in War with a potent Enemy, whose Strength, now, after so many Years Experience as we have had of it, we have learn'd, I suppose, not to despise.

Forasmuch therefore as this tedious and expensive War, which we have been now, for many Years engag'd in, and of which God knows when we shall see an End, was, when it was first undertaken, and still is, the necessary Remedy of those much worse Evils that we were before in Fear, and indeed in very great Danger of; and forasmuch as the great Danger we were in of those Evils was directly and naturally occasion'd by the young Princes being sent abroad to wander in Foreign Countries, by those who had first Rebelled against and Murdered the Father, and then Seized upon his and their Inheritance; I think I may truly say, that tho' *our Fathers* who *sinned are not*; ye *we*, in this heavy Judgment of God still lying upon us, do to this Day, *bear their Iniquities*; and how much longer we shall do so, under this, or some other Judgment, God only knows.

But, I observ'd before, that these Words might be understood, not only as affirming a

Matter of Fact, that thus it is, but also as implying a Complaint, or an Expostulation with God about it; *Our Fathers have sinned, and we have born their Iniquities.* As if it had been said, "Why is this? Or what Justice or Reason is there in it, that *we* should bear *the Iniquities of our Fathers* that sinned? Why is it, that when they are dead and gone out of the World, who did the Sin; We, who, being not then Born, could not; We, who, if we had been then Living, would not have consented to, nor been Partakers in their Wickedness, should be Punished for it." And therefore I propounded in the Second Place, and to that I now proceed,

II. To shew that this Method of God's dealing with sinful Men is not to be complain'd of as unjust. And this I hope will sufficiently appear, if these following things be consider'd.

I. That the Temporal Evils, by which the Sins of the Fathers are punish'd in their Children, are, many times, no other than the natural and necessary Effects of those Sins which the Fathers were guilty of.

This I have shewn to be in great Measure true as to those Evils which we of this Nation have felt, and do still feel, in Punishment (as we may well think) of the Sin that
was

was committed as on this Day by our Fathers, in the barbarous Murder of the Lord's Anointed.

And the same is plainly true in many other Instances.

For thus the Prodigal wastes away, in Rioting, Excess or Gaming, that Portion of Worldly Goods which was left him by his careful Ancestors, or neglects those Opportunities of improving his Stock which the good Providence of God afforded him; and by this means comes to Beggary, He and his Children after him: But how can it otherwise be, unless God should every Day work Miracles, and multiply Men's Treasure (as once he did the poor *Widow's Oyl*) on purpose to maintain them in their Luxury, Extravagance or Sloth?

And so likewise the intemperate and unclean Person fills his Body with foul Humours, and contracts loathsome Diseases, and these of course descend to those that derive their Bodies from his: And it must needs be so, unless God should interpose with his Almighty Power, to put a stop to the natural Effects of our Folly and Madness. This indeed he might do, if he pleas'd; but that he should do so, can with no Reason be expected. And when it thus happens, and the Father lives to see it, this must needs be a sore Affliction, and Punishment to him; but to the Children

it is only a Misfortune, and on God's Part it is only a Permission; who can't therefore be charged with Injustice for suffering Things to take their natural Course.

2. It may be considered, that the Temporal Evils and Calamities wherewith God punishes the Sins of the Fathers in their Children, are, for the most part, only Privations of those Mercies which He had freely bestowed upon them once; or Denials of such Favours as he might (if he had pleas'd) have conferr'd upon them, but was under no Obligation, in Justice, to grant, although they had been descended from the most vertuous Parents. Or, in other Words, The Children of wicked Parents are not so Happy and Prosperous as God could have made them, if he would: Their Punishment is commonly no more than this, that God does not shew them such Favour, as he does (it may be) shew to some others, but is not oblig'd to shew to any. And what Injustice is there in this? *May not he do what he will with his own?* May not he *have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy*, and shew favour to whom he pleases?

Thus it was in the Case of *Rehoboam*, from whom God was pleased to suffer Ten Tribes to revolt, for the Sin and Idolatry of his Father *Solomon*: But he needed not to have left him one Tribe; to reign over one Tribe was more than he, or his Father either, could have chal-

challeng'd of God as a Due; God did him no wrong therefore in giving him no more than one Tribe: And we can't say that he did, without denying to God, the Sovereign Lord and Proprietor of all Things, that Power and Liberty which we our selves claim of bestowing our free and unmerited Favours on whom we will. For what Man is there, who, having a Place or Gift to bestow, will not chuse to bestow it rather on One whose Father was his Friend, than on One whose Father was his Enemy? And who can think him to blame for so doing? If we therefore, who are only Stewards of those Things which we possess, and pretend to give away, may do thus, certainly God, the true Owner and Proprietor of all Things, may do the same, without the least Imputation of Injustice.

And such have been the Calamities which have befallen this Nation, since the Perpetration of that horrid Wickedness which we this Day lament; those Evils, I mean more especially, which have in natural Consequence been produced or occasion'd thereby; very grievous Calamities indeed they have been in themselves, but yet they have been rather Denials or Privations of Good, than positive Inflictions of Evil. For tho' we suffer'd for several Years after the Commission of this great Wickedness, the manifold Inconveniences both of Anarchy and Tyranny; and have never
since

since been so well settled, either in Government or Religion, as we were before ; yet after all that is come upon us, the most that can be said, is, that we have not been so happy a Nation as we might have been, and probably should have been, had not the Guilt of that Royal and Innocent Blood that was as this Day shed, lain upon us ; But still (God be thanked) we have been more Happy than most of our Neighbour-Nations ; we have, in the main, enjoy'd a much greater Measure of Liberty and Peace, of Plenty and Prosperity than most of them have done. So that tho' we have been always, like the *Israelities* of old, Murmuring and Complaining ; and, like *Solomon's Fool*, crying out of the Badness of the Times, and *enquiring, why the former Days were better than these* ; yet I believe if they who have been the most full of Complaints, had, when they were first born into the World, been endued with a Foresight of all that has since happen'd in the World, and it had then been put to their Choice to have liv'd in what Part of the World they had pleas'd, it would have puzzled them to have found out any Country in the whole Earth, wherein they could rather have chosen to have liv'd ; or wherein if they had lived, they would have suffer'd fewer Difficulties, or lesser Inconveniences, or have enjoy'd a greater Measure of Ease, Safety, Plenty, and Prosperity, than

than they have done here. So that tho' it may be true, and I think it probable that it is so, that we have in our Age born, in some Measure, the Iniquities of our Fathers, yet upon the whole, we have no reason to be discontented with our Lot, or to complain as if we were hardly dealt with. But,

3. In order to the farther clearing this Method of the Divine Providence from the least Imputation of Injustice, it may be considered, That God has a Sovereign and uncontrollable Dominion over all our Persons, as well as over our Possessions; that we our selves are his Goods, as well as any of those things are, which we, by his Bounty, do enjoy; For 'twas he that made us, as well as all other things; And he might not have created us at all, or he might have made us Birds, or Beasts, or Fishes; Monsters, or Naturals; and if he had done so, we could not have complain'd. For, as the *Apostle* argues, *Rom. ix. 12. Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter Power over the Clay, of the same Lump to make one Vessel unto Honour, and another unto Dishonour?*

He therefore being our Sovereign Lord, to whom we are indebted for all we have, and to whose meer Grace and Goodness it is entirely owing that we our selves have any Being at all; He may, in Right of that absolute Dominion

minion which he has over us as our Creator, without any Injustice, put us into whatever Condition he pleases, or alter it for the worse whenever he will, without assigning any other Cause or Reason of his so doing, but his own Pleasure only. Nay, he may, if he will, wholly take away that Life and Being, which he freely gave us, whenever he lists; when we are but a Month, or but a Day old, as well as when we have lived here Threescore or Four-score Years; And in all this he does us no wrong; because it was a free and unmerited Favour, that we ever liv'd at all, and nothing can oblige him to continue to us an undeserved Favour, unless he pleases, or for a longer time than he sees good.

In short; whatever Condition God is pleas'd to put any of his Creatures into, if it be but better than Non-existence, or not being at all, *that* he may put any of his Creatures into, tho' they be perfectly innocent, without doing them any wrong: And therefore it can be no Injustice in God, to take Occasion from the Sins of our Fathers, or Progenitors, to deal so by us as he might have done, tho' neither they nor we had sinned. For he may certainly, without Injustice, do that upon any Occasion, which he might have justly done upon no Occasion at all.

4. It may be also considered farther, that very many, if not most, of the Evils and Calamities

lamities by which God punishes the Sins of the Fathers in their Children, are such as are very great Punishments to the Parents, but are often very small Evils, nay sometimes are very great Blessings and Favours, to the Children which suffer them.

For thus, the untimely Death of a hopeful Child is indeed a very sore Affliction to the Parent, especially when he reflects upon it as a Punishment sent by God upon him for his Sin: But 'tis a Blessing to the Child himself, who dies in the Lord, and is convey'd into Paradise out of a troublesome World, before he so much as knew the Trouble of it.

And thus likewise, To a Man that has toiled and drudged all his Days, endeavouring by Fraud, Oppression and Extortion, to heap together a great deal of Wealth, and to raise a Family, it must needs be a great Grief and Disappointment, to see his Wealth, all his ill-gotten Goods, mouldering, wasting, or (as the *Wise Man* expresses it) *fleeing* away; so that his Children, whom he has brought up in all Delicacy and Softness, are in danger of being reduc'd to Beggary, or must be forced to get their Living by hard Labour; But to the Children themselves, for whose sake it is that he is so much concern'd, this Dispensation of Providence may be the greatest Blessing that could befall them; and so it will be, if the Consideration thereof impresses upon their Minds a
serious

serious Sense of Religion, and helps to mortify them to this World, and puts them upon taking good Courses, and makes them to be-ware of splitting themselves upon the same Rock.

And so likewise, if it be supposed (as I do indeed suppose) that we *have born*, and do still bear, *the Iniquities of our Fathers*, who *sinned and are not* ; particularly that great Iniquity which was acted as upon this Day, the Barbarous Murder of an Excellent Prince, together with the other Wickednesses that were preparatory thereto ; there may be, however, a great Deal of Goodness as well as of Justice in this Dispensation of Providence. For to them who had a Hand in this Sin, if they had any Affection at all to their Native Country, or any Care and Concern about Posterity, it could not but be an Affliction to see what Desolation they had by this Sin, and the Preparations to it, brought upon their Country ; to behold what Disorder and Confusion they had put every thing into, and to contemplate the Miseries which were thereby entail'd upon their Posterity : But now to us their Children, even those Evils that we have suffered, or do yet suffer, upon that Account, may in Consequence, be a Blessing. And so they will be, if we thereby shall be warn'd to avoid those Sins, which have drawn down such Miseries upon us ; so they will be, if we thereby shall

be taught to bear steady Loyalty to our S O-
V E R E I G N, to yield due Obedience to the
Laws, to conform regularly to that excellent
Worship which by G O D's Providence has
been since restor'd, and is now established
among us ; to be humble, contented, and or-
derly, in our several Stations ; to *study to be*
quiet, and to do our own Business, and to *seek*
and endeavour after the things that make for
Peace. If we, I say, shall be so happy as, by
all the Evils that have befallen us, to learn
these Vertues and Graces, we shall have no
Reason to complain of our having suffer'd
those Evils, from which we shall have reaped
such great Advantage. For, much better will
it be for us to have born the Punishment of
our Fathers Iniquity, without the Guilt of it,
than it would be to incur the like Guilt our
selves (as perhaps without such Warning we
should have done) altho' we might escape the
Temporal Punishment thereof. Any Evil is to
be reckon'd as good, when it prevents or cures
a greater Evil ; and there's no Evil of Affliction
so great as the least Evil of Sin.

In this therefore, and such like Cases, when
by the *Judgments* of G O D (whether for
their own or others Sins) Men are taught *Righ-*
teousness, they have no Reason to complain.
When the Wickedness of the Fathers is, with
this good Effect, visited upon their Children,
tho' the Matter of the Punishment seems to
light

light upon the Children, it is yet in truth a Punishment only to the wicked Parents ; but to the Children it is a great Blessing, and what they will have Reason to bless G O D for to all Eternity. Such Punishments as this are like the *Pillar of the Cloud*, wherewith G O D once conducted the *Israelites* thro' the *Red Sea* ; they have a double, and a very different Aspect ; for, on the one Side, *viz.* that which looks towards the Parents, they are all Blackness, and Darkness, and Melancholy ; they can't but be heartily concern'd at the Miseries which they have entail'd upon their Posterity ; but on the other Side, *viz.* that which looks towards the Children, they are all Light and Brightness, serving to direct them in the Way they are to go, and helping them to steer in the right Course to the Heavenly *Canaan*, the Land of Everlasting Blessedness.

Thus the Divine Justice might be vindicated in Punishing, as it sometimes does, the Sins of the Fathers in their Children, tho' it be supposed that the Children themselves have done nothing to deserve Punishment. But then I add in the 5th and last Place,

5. That whatever the Temporal Evils and Afflictions are, wherewith G O D is at any time pleased to punish the Sins of the Fathers in their Children, they are never more nor greater than the Children themselves do deserve to suffer, meerly for their own Transgressions.

gressions. And therefore, they can have no Reason to think it hard that G O D is pleas'd to take Occasion from the Sins of their Fathers to inflict upon them those Plagues and Punishments, which otherwise perhaps he would not have inflicted ; because, without Injustice, he might have laid the same upon them much sooner, and in a larger Measure, only upon the Account of their own Personal Guilt and Transgression.

This was certainly the Case of the *Jews* who were carried Captive to *Babylon*. They said, and perhaps truly, *Our Fathers have sinned—and we have born their Iniquity* ; They said, and perhaps truly, *the Fathers have eaten sowre Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth are set on Edge* ; but they needed not to have look'd further for a Reason of all the Calamities that had befallen them, than to themselves only. They had *had* indeed a good King, who after the wicked Reign of *Manasseh*, by which the People had been exceedingly corrupted, had shewn them an excellent Pattern, and had earnestly endeavoured to reform the State of Things ; but it does not appear by the History that the People were at all reform'd by his Care. And therefore the Prophet *Ezekiel* sharply reproves them, when they were in the Captivity in *Babylon*, for laying the Blame of the Bondage which they then endur'd, only upon the Transgression of their Fathers in the

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Reign

98 Of Children's Bearing the

Reign of *Manasseh*, as if they themselves had done nothing at all to deserve it. *What mean*

Ezek. xviii. 2. ye, that ye use this Proverb concerning the Land of Israel, saying,

The Fathers have eaten sowre Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth are set on Edge? He does not say, that there was not then, nor ever had been, any Ground in Fact for that Proverbial Speech ; but only, asks the Question, *What mean ye* to use this Proverb ? In which Words it is not imply'd, that the Proverb was never true, but only that They in particular had no Reason to use it ; that is, that they had done enough themselves to deserve all they suffered and a great deal more, and so should not have needed, in Excuse as it were of themselves, to have laid all the Blame upon their Fathers. And therefore it follows in the next Verse, *As I live, saith the Lord, ye shall not have Occasion any more to use this Proverb in Israel.* Which Words are not (as I suppose) to be understood, as if the Proverb might never be used ; that is, as if G O D never had, nor never would inflict Temporal Evils upon Children for the Sins of the Fathers ; for he himself plainly declares the contrary, *Exod. xxxiv. 7.* (and in more than ten Places besides) *Visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, and upon the Childrens Children, unto the third, and unto the fourth Generation ;* and I have already had Occasion to mention several

Examples

Examples of G O D's thus dealing with Men : But (the Meaning of those Words, *Ye shall not have Occasion to use this Proverb*, I take to be this,) that since they were so conceited of themselves, and stood so much in the Justification of their own Innocence ; G O D was resolv'd to continue his Judgments upon them so long until their Eyes should be opened to see their own Guilt, and to be sensible that all the Sufferings which they had endured, had been no more than a just Punishment upon them for their own Transgression only ; *Ye shall not have Occasion to use this Proverb any more.*

And this same, I doubt, is now our Case. Very willing we are to shift off the Blame from our selves, and to say, as in the Text, *Our Fathers have sinned, and we have born their Iniquity* : And, it may be, we have ; I think it probable enough that we have done so ; and particularly, that the Innocent Blood shed as upon this Day, has since in many Instances been reveng'd upon us : But be it so, We, however, should not need to go so far off for a Reason of all our Calamities ; because, if our Eyes be but open, we may easily see a sufficient Cause of them nearer Home. This I dare say, that whoever reads the History of the Times before that Great Rebellion brake out, and compares the State of Things then with what it is now ; I mean as to Matters of Religion and Morality ; as to the Exercise of

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Piety,

Piety, Justice and Sobriety, will have little Reason to think that we are better than our Fathers ; He will, I fear, rather have Reason to say that we are a great deal worse ; so that we need not look farther than to our selves only for a Cause of all those Evils that have befallen us, or which we have yet Cause to fear. Or if what we have hitherto suffered has been only for the Sins of our Fathers, we have Reason to fear, that as our Wickedness is, to all appearance, greater than theirs, so our Posterity will live to see worse Times than we have done.

For then, in the Days of our Fathers, there was at least a Form of Godliness ; and now there is hardly so much as that : Then the Publick Devotions were performed regularly, the Churches duly frequented, the *Pater familias* follow'd to his Parish-Church by his whole Household ; good Orders, and good Hours were then kept in Families ; Children and Servants were Catechis'd and taught their Duty ; and that Leisure Time from Business in Evenings, which is now by too many spent in intemperate Clubs, or in the Diversions of an impudent and ungodly Theatre, was then generally pass'd away in innocent and friendly Conversation among Neighbours, and in Family Discipline and Devotion. Then, Vice, however it might be secretly practis'd, was ashamed to be seen ; there was no Prophane-
ness

ness in the Streets : None had the Confidence then to speak openly against Religion, to *make a Mock at Sin*, to ridicule the Holy Scriptures, to *deny the Lord that bought them*, to plead for Irreligion, to publish Blasphemy in Print, or to appear other than a Friend to Piety and Goodness : Nay then, the Stage it self (at least in Comparison with what it has been since) was chaste, modest, and virtuous. But what the State of Things is now, in all these Respects, I shall not need to observe ; we all see it, and know it full well. And if I should say moreover that there are some still among us as deeply tainted with those Principles of Sedition and Rebellion which brought about this Day's Tragedy, as any of their Fathers were, and who, if they had lived in their Days, would have been as forward as the forwardest of them were in unhinging the Government, and destroying the Church, nay, and in bringing their Sovereign to the Block ; tho' some, perhaps, would be angry at my saying this, I fear it would be only for my speaking a Truth out of Season ; and they, I believe, would be most angry with me for saying it, who best know it to be a Truth.

Upon the whole then, it being so apparent that we are not better than our Fathers (I would to GOD I could say that we are not worse,) tho' it may be true, that we do in some Measure bear their Iniquities,

we have yet no Reason to complain; neither have we more Occasion than the *Jews* in Captivity had, to use that Proverb, *The Fathers have eaten sowre Grapes, and the Childrens Teeth are set on Edge*; But rather, I'm sure we may well use those Words of the Prophet *Ezra*, applying them to our selves, and say; *After all that is come upon us, for our evil Deeds, and for our great Trespass, our GOD has punished us less than our Iniquities deserve*; and he would have done so, altho' he had not granted us any of those wonderful Deliverances which he has been pleas'd in our great Extremities to vouchsafe unto us.

But whether *we* now have Reason to use that Proverb or not, it is certain, that it may sometimes be used; it is certain, that *GOD* does sometimes *visit the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children*. And therefore, tho' when this happens, it is not (as I have shewn) to be complain'd of; yet we may at any time, very reasonably and piously desire of *GOD*, that it may not so happen to us. And this was the Third and last Point I propounded to speak to; *Viz.*

III. To shew that it is a proper Matter of Petition or Prayer to *GOD*, That he would be pleas'd to cut off this Entail of Punishment, and not make us bear the Iniquities of our Fathers.

In

In this Sense, I observed before, the Words of the Text, consider'd as Part of a Prayer to G O D, may be understood, *viz.* as urging a Reason to move G O D to have Compassion upon his People in Captivity: *Our Fathers have sinned, and are not, and we have born their Iniquities:* As if it had been said; " Hitherto we have born them, but let it " be so now no longer; Let thy Justice be satisfied with that Vengeance which thou hast " already taken, in the Miseries which our " Fathers endured in their own Persons, and " which they lived to see brought upon us " their Children by their Means; Now therefore, since they *are not*, since they, being gone out of this World, are no longer sensible of those Evils which we suffer in it; we humbly pray thee, that thou " wouldst have Pity upon us their Children, " and not afflict us any longer upon their " Account: 'Tis time, we hope, now, that " thou shouldst make a new Trial of us, and " see if we will not behave our selves better " than our Fathers did. "

And there are other Examples in Scripture of Prayer or Petition of this Kind:

We have sinned with our Fathers, Psal. cvi. 6.
says the Psalmist, *we have committed Iniquity, we have done wickedly; Our Fathers understood not thy Wonders in Egypt,* and so on. What could they mean by thus confessing the

Sins of their Fathers, but to deprecate the Evils whereby those Sins had deserv'd to be punished in their Posterity?

It is therefore an unreasonable Exception which some have made to that Petition in our Litany, *Remember not Lord our Offences, nor the Offences of our Forefathers*; as if (for that's what they would make the World believe of us) we herein comply'd with the *Papists*, in Praying for the Dead: But no such Matter, we do not herein Pray for the Dead, for those who (as the Text expresses it) *are not*; we only Pray for our selves who are alive, that we may not bear their Iniquities. And what Petition can be better grounded and warranted than this is, when we are so plainly told in several Places of Scripture, that GOD does *visit the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children*?

And as caulless is their Anger who are displeased with us for Keeping this Day, as a Day of Solemn Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, on which, *to the Dishonour of our Nation, and the Reproach of the Reformed Religion*, the Blessed King CHARLES I. was barbarously Murdered by his own Subjects, the People of this Land; and that too in the most shameful Manner, Try'd in a pretended High Court of Justice, and by them Sentenced to be Executed as a Malefactor.

But

But why are they angry with us for Keeping this Day? Is it because they do not like that a Day of Fasting should be kept upon such an Occasion? Then, it seems, they approve of the Fact; they think it was well done; they think it was a thing not, to be ashamed or repented of. *But who*

can stretch forth his Hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guilt- 1 Sam. xxvi.
9.

less? If then we will take the Judgment of the Scripture before theirs, it was a Sin, and a great one too; and, if ever any single Act was such, it was a National Sin; for 'twas done by them that had then usurp'd the Supreme Authority; and there was also too general a Consent of the People to it; there is good Reason therefore that the whole Nation should be humbled and sorrowful for it, and with one Voice and Cry deprecate the Punishment thereof.

But it is a long while ago, they say, since this was done; 'tis fit therefore now that the Day should be laid aside; If it was a Sin, 'twas not however *our Sin*, but the Sin of *our Fathers*, and they *are not*; What matters it then to us what they did? They have answer'd for it to GOD, and receiv'd their own Doom; and why should we, who had no Hand at all in the Thing, take the Guilt of it upon our selves?

But

But if our *Fathers*, who *sinned*, are not, we may still bear their Iniquities ; It is expressly said in Scripture, that G O D *visits the sins of the Fathers upon the Children*, even to the *third and fourth Generation*. If then we are still liable to the Divine Judgments upon that Account, I think there is Reason good that we should still continue to Pray, as we have hitherto done, that these Judgments may not befall us ; but that G O D will be reconciled to the Land ; and when he makes Inquisition for Blood, not lay the Guilt of this innocent Blood to the Charge of the People of this Land, nor ever require it of us or our Posterity. And 'twill be too soon to leave off Praying thus ; nay, 'twill (I think) be too soon so much as to enter into any Debate about it, until (at least) the Term of this express Divine Threatning shall be expir'd, that is, until the *third and fourth Generation* shall be past and gone, and the *Children, and the Childrens Children* shall be gathered unto their Fathers.

And more than this needs not, I hope, be said upon this Point, to those who, by their Presence in this Place, upon this Occasion, do sufficiently shew their Approbation of the Keeping of this Day, and that they think there is but too great Reason for it. For I will not suppose it possible that any of you have been now mocking of God, while you have seemed to be praying to him.

I only

I only add therefore, that to make the Prayers we have now put up to God availing, we must forsake our Sins, as well as confess them. As therefore we have been now Confessing that they were *the Crying Sins of this Nation that brought down this heavy Judgment upon us*; so let us be careful that we *sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto us*. And as we have been Praying that God would *not lay to our Charge the Guilt of that innocent Blood which was as this Day shed*; so let us be cautious never to give Consent to any such Sin, nor to any Approaches towards it.

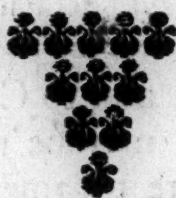
This is the Way to get the Entail of Punishment cut off; I don't say that this will certainly do it; (for we have Instances in Scripture of the Sins of Fathers punished in their Children, even when the Children were not such Sinners as the Fathers had been); but that this is the likeliest Means we can use to do it; and that without this there can be no reasonable Expectation that it should be done.

In a word then, and to Conclude all; That the whole Nation may be reform'd, let every one of us take Care to amend himself. And that the Government both in Church and State may be maintain'd, and our Holy Religion and the Publick Peace preserv'd, (which, I hope, is what we do all heartily desire.) Let every one of us mind his own Business, and move regularly

gularly in his own Sphere, and leave it to Kings to govern Nations, and to God to govern the World.

And when by our Afflictions we shall be brought to this Religious, Loyal, Humble Peaceable and Contented Temper ; then, and not before, we may reasonably look to see good Times ; then we may pray, and reasonably hope it will be with good Success, That God will *comfort us again now after the Time that he has plagued us, and for the Years wherein we have suffered Adversity.*

Which God of his Goodness grant, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ : To whom, &c.





S E R M O N I V.

Preach'd before the

Q U E E N
A T

St. *J A M E S*'s,

M A R C H the 8th, 1708.



SERMON IV.

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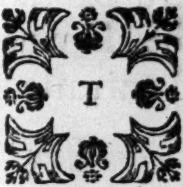
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1802

The Divine Institution of Magistracy, and the gracious Design of its Institution.

R O M. XIII. 4.

He is the Minister of God to thee for Good.

 H E main Design of the *Apostle* in the first half of this Chapter, is to teach the Duty of Subjects, and to press the Practice thereof.

Their Duty in general he declares to be *Subjection*; that is, both Submission to the Authority of their Governors, and Obedience to their Laws; *Ver. 1. Let every Soul be subject to the Higher Powers.*

And

And the Reasons or Motives whereby in that, and in the following Verses, he enforces this Duty, are chiefly Two; (both which are also intimated in the Text) *viz.* 1. The Divine Institution of Magistracy; *He is the Minister of GOD*: And, 2. The gracious Design of its Institution; *for Good: He is the Minister of GOD to thee for Good.* Both which Points I shall therefore now in Order speak to; and the Consideration of them both may serve as well to suggest to the Magistrate his Duty, as to bind Subjects to theirs; and likewise for several other good Purposes, some of which I shall note as I go along.

I. One Thing here declar'd, is the Divine Institution of Magistracy; *He is the Minister of GOD*: Which Words do import Two Things; 1. That it is of GOD, or by Divine Appointment, that some do bear Rule over others; And, 2. That the Authority exercis'd by the Magistrate is a Ray or Portion of the Divine Authority, communicated to him, and entrusted with him by GOD.

I. That it is of GOD, or by Divine Appointment, that some do bear Rule over others.

I do not say, that the particular Form of Government is, in every Nation, 'specially prescribed by GOD. I see no Reason to affirm that

that it was always so, even in *Judea* itself; and much less that it has been ordinarily so, in any other Nation.

Neither do I say that the Person bearing the Office of Magistracy is always of Divine Designation and Appointment; or that he is nominated to his Office by GOD; and that no Person, not so design'd or nominated, may lawfully bear it. For the Titles and Claims to Government have been various; Of several of the *Jewish* Judges and Kings the Title was indeed such a special Divine Appointment; But of the first Kings that ever were in the World, the Title was, most probably, only their Paternal Right to rule and govern their own Children and Descendants: And in other Countries, and in later Times, of some the Title has been Election, and of others Hereditary Succession: And of all the Kings now Reigning in the World, and claiming to do so by Hereditary Succession, there is not perhaps any One whose Title was not originally founded in Election or Conquest. 'Tis most reasonable therefore now, that in every Place *that* should be taken to be the most *rightful* Government which is establish'd; *the Powers that be* are ordained of GOD; and *that the best Title* to Government which has prevail'd by Prescription, or is settled by the Constitution: And whoever in any Place, should now set up himself upon any other Title, would be but a Disturber

sturber of the Peace of the World ; would be the Author of much Confusion, and might justly be treated as an Enemy to his Country.

I do not, I say, therefore, affirm either that the Form of Government in every Place, is, or ought to be, of Divine Prescription ; or that the Person exercising the same is always of Divine Designation, any otherwise than as all Changes and Revolutions in Government are brought about by the Working or Permission of the Divine Providence : In which Sense the

Psalmist says, that *G O D* is the Judge, he putteth down One, and setteth up another ; and the Prophet Daniel, that the most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will ; and that he removeth Kings and setteth up Kings : and the Prophet *Jeremy*, that *G O D* had given (among other Lands) the Land of *Judea* into the Hand of *Nebucadnezzar* the King of *Babylon* his Servant, because in his Providence he had permitted him, tho' without any just Title thereto, to make a Conquest thereof.

But whatever the Form of Government be, that, whether by Divine Appointment, or by Consent or Constitution, is receiv'd and established in any Countrey ; and whether the Person who has the Administration of the same be (in any other Sense than only Providentially) of Divine

vine Designation, or not; what I say and affirm, is, That the Government it self, which he exercises and administers, is of Divine Institution; that is, that it is the Will of GOD that some should bear Rule, and that others should be in Subjection; and that they which bear Rule, should enact Laws for the Preservation of Justice and Peace among their Subjects, and duly execute the Laws made for that Purpose: In which Two Things, the whole Power and Exercise of Sovereignty do consist.

And that Magistracy it self is thus of Divine Institution, is the least, I think, that can be understood to be meant in those Words of Solomon, Prov. viii. 15. *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice*; Or by those of the Apostle at the first Verse of this Chapter; *There is no Power but of God; the Powers that be are ordained of God.* Or by St. Peter, 1 Epist. ii. 13. *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King, as Supreme, or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the Punishment of Evil Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.* But,

II. When the Magistrate is called here *the Minister of GOD*; the Meaning, I suppose, is more than this, viz. not only that the Office it self is by Divine Appointment or Institution;

tution ; but also, that the Authority by which the Magistrate acts, and the Power which he exercises in the Execution of his Office, is a Ray or Portion of the Divine Authority and Power, deriv'd to him from, and communicated to him by G O D.

For the *Apostle* here says, He is a *Minister*, that is, a Servant, and if Servant to another, then, plainly, not his own Master, and if not Master of himself, much less can he be, in his own Right, Master of another. The Authority therefore by which he acts, the Power which he exercises in the Government of his Subjects, are not, properly, his own, are not natural or essential to his Person, are not inherently in himself; but must be deriv'd to him from that Superior Being who has Authority over both him and his Subjects; who can Commission him to bear Rule over them, and can lay it as a Duty upon them to be subject to him.

And so it follows in the Text; He is *the Minister* (or the Servant) *of God*. And it must needs be so; If he be any body's Servant, it must be G O D's: For 'twould be absurd to say, that he is *their Servant* over whom he bears Rule; because that would be in Effect to say, that it is all one to command, and to obey; to have Power over, and to be subject to.

I do not indeed deny but that, according to the Constitution of some Countries, the Magistrate, even the highest Magistrate of all, may be chosen to his Office by the People.

People. 'Tis plainly so in all Elective Kingdoms, where the Supreme human Power is plac'd in One nominated by the People, in One who before such Nomination had no more Right to it than any other Man, and who (according to the Constitution of the Countrey) could not lawfully have been put into the Possession of it any other way: But nevertheless I say, that even in this Case, tho' the People name the Person, they don't give him his Authority; They chuse the Officer, but when that's done, he is GOD's Officer, not theirs; *He is the Minister of GOD*, not the Servant of the People; He has his Commission and Authority from GOD, tho' he had his Nomination from them. And if it be the Sovereign Power of all which according to the Constitution, he is, by virtue of such Election, chosen to, being possess'd of that, he has no Superior but GOD; he has none above him upon Earth, to question, censure or punish him; and *who-soever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of GOD*.

And in this there is no Incongruity or Absurdity at all. It should not therefore, methinks, be so strange to any, as some seem to think it, that the Sovereign Power upon Earth should be subject only to GOD, and not be accountable to the People; not even altho' he became at first possess'd of such Power only by their Suffrage, or by their voluntary Acceptance of him;

him; and much less if he came to it by any other Title: Especially, there being Instances of the like Nature continually before our Eyes; I mean, wherein the Officer has his Nomination from One, and receives his Authority from another; and is accountable for the Exercise of his Power, not to those that chose him, but to some Power Superior both to him and them, from whom, after he was chosen, he had his Authority to act.

For thus it is with us, in all Corporations that have Charters, and it may be, in some others; they are empower'd by their Charters, or claim by Prescription, to chuse their own Mayor, or other chief Magistrate; but when he is chosen, 'tis from the QUEEN that he has his Authority; and after he is plac'd in his Office, he is not their *Servant* that chose him, but their *Governor*. And in Case he should mis-behave himself in his Office; he is nor accountable to those that chose him to it, but to the QUEEN, by whose Commission he acted in it. They indeed may complain of him, or bear witness against him; but it belongs to that Superior Power (Superior both to him and them) from whom he had his Authority, to judge, whether he did mis-behave himself or not; and, if he did, to inflict on him a proper Punishment.

Nay, this was in Truth the very Case of the *Roman Emperors*, in the Apostolical Times;

Times ; They were chosen Emperors by the Army, or the Senate ; but the Dignity they were chosen to was *Imperial*, their Power, consequently, was Sovereign. And therefore, To them, as invested with such Authority, the *Apostle*, here in this Chapter, declares it to be the Duty of every other Person, (not excepting the Electors themselves) to be subject ; *Let every Soul be Subject to the Higher Powers.* Of them, in Possession of the Imperial Dignity, he speaks, when he says, *There is no Power but of GOD ; the Powers that be are ordained of GOD.* Against them, being invested with Sovereign Authority, he declares it to be unlawful for the Subjects to make Resistance, and denounces *Damnation* to such as dare to do it. With Regard to them, (for it must have been with a special Regard to the Emperor then reigning, whether it was *Claudius* or *Nero*, both of them very bad ones) He says, *Whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of GOD ;* And, lastly, 'twas of one of them, that he says here in the Text, *He is the Minister of GOD ;* that is, he acts by a Divine Commission ; and the Power which he regularly exercises is delegated to him by GOD.

And it must needs be so, The Supreme Magistrate must have his Power from GOD ; because he can have it no other Way ; For that

it is not originally and essentially in himself, has been already shewn ; and that he can't have it from the People is evident, because it is such a Power as the People never had, nor could have ; and what they have not themselves, they can't give to another.

For Instance : The Supreme Magistrate has
 (by the Consent of all) the Power
 v. 4. of Life and Death ; He *bears the*
Sword, the *Apostle* here says ; and he bears it, he farther says, *not in vain* ; He may therefore warrantably make use of it, as there is Occasion, to cut off Evil Doers : But now I say this Power can't be given to him by the People, because 'tis what they themselves have not. For no Man, as a private Man, has Power over his Brother's Life ; but he would be a Murderer, should he, of his own Head, kill even a Malefactor : Nay, no Man has Power over his own Life, not even in those Cases wherein the Magistrate (by the Allowance of all) has Power over it : For a private Man would be *Felo de se*, should he, though immediately after he had Murder'd another, and for that very Reason too, kill himself ; and yet when this Crime, his having murder'd another, is confess'd in Court, or fully prov'd against him before the Magistrate, it may with much better Reason be doubted whether the Magistrate can lawfully pardon him, (G o d himself having
 Gen. ix. 6. said, *who so sheddeth Man's Blood,*
by Man shall his Blood be shed)
 than

than whether he may lawfully condemn him to suffer the Death he has deserved.

And as this Authority could not be granted to Magistrates by single Men (no Man singly having Power over his own or another's Life) so neither could it be granted by the Community : For how should they, in a Body, or as in Company, come to have a greater Power, than was among them all the while they were single ?

Besides ; This Position, that *the Sovereign Power of the Supreme Magistrate is derived to him from the Aggregate Body of the People, as by their Grant or Concession* ; as it is directly contrary to what the *Apostle* here affirms, *viz.* that *there is no Power but of G O D* ; so it is plainly grounded upon a Supposition that is false in Fact ; *Viz.* that there were a great Number of Men living together upon the Earth before the first Institution of Civil Government ; which whole Multitude had then by Natural Right, the same Power over single Men, which is now exercis'd by the Magistrate.

This indeed might possibly have been true, in Case this Multitude had sprung together out of the Earth ; or if they had been all Created by G O D at one and the same Time : But it can't be true upon Supposition that they all descended from the same first Parents, *Adam* and *Eve* ; for it being so, no Man, except only the

the first Man of all, ever came into the World, but he was naturally, at the very instant of his Birth, in a State of Subjection to some other Man : No Man, since the first, was ever, properly speaking, Free-born. For in his Natural Capacity, he was born a Subject to his own Parents, and in his Political Capacity, to the King, or other Chief Governor of that Kingdom or State, of which, at his Birth, he became a Member. The People could not therefore give to any Man that Authority over either themselves or others which they themselves never had ; They could not give to another what was not their own to give ; they could not give to one Man what another Man was then in the lawful Possession of.

Thus, I hope, it appears, that Government is of Divine Institution, and that the Authority of those that are plac'd in Government is from God ; Both which I suppose, were meant by the *Apostle*, in these Words, *He is the Minister of G O D.*

And from this Truth, these following Things may fairly be inferr'd.

I. That it ought to be a main Part of the Magistrate's Care (indeed his chiefest Care of all) to promote the Honour of G O D, whose *Minister he is.*

Should I go about to declare, How, or by what Means, he may best do this, I might be thought,

thought, perhaps to touch too nearly upon Politicks ; and therefore I wholly forbear that. But I hope it may pass for good Divinity, and nothing more, to say in general, That the Magistrate, even the Sovereign Power of all, being a Subject of GOD, being (as the *Apostle* here says) *the Minister*, or the Servant, of GOD, being put in Trust by GOD, and acting in whatever he does, as a Magistrate, in GOD's Name, and by his Commission, ought, in the whole Administration of his High Office, to have an Eye to GOD's Glory ; and consequently to provide, the best he can, by wholesome Laws, and a due and prudent Execution of them, for the perpetual Establishment of the true Religion, and for the well Instructing of all his Subjects therein ; for the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for the effectual Suppression of all Prophaneness, Vice and Immorality. For of the *King*, as *Supreme*, as well as of subordinate *Governors* and Magistrates, the *Apostle* says, that they are sent by GOD, *for the Punishment of Evil Doers, and for the Praise of them that do well.* 1 Pet. ii. 14.

2. If the Magistrate be *the Minister*, or the Servant of God, then He, as well as his People, is subject to another Power, even to the Great GOD of Heaven and Earth, by whom *Kings reign*, and who is *King of kings, and Lord of lords.* Prov. viii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Then

Then He, no less than they, must expect to be call'd to Account for all the Talents his Great Master was pleas'd to entrust him with ; and that he may be able to give a comfortable Account thereof, it ought to be his Endeavour (as 'tis most certainly his Duty) to employ all his Authority and Power for those good Purposes for which they were given to him by GOD, that is, to protect his Subjects from Violence and Injury, to maintain Religion and Justice, and to preserve Peace among Men.

For altho' he be not (the Highest Power of all most certainly is not) accountable to any upon Earth ; because there is none upon Earth Superior to him ; (and none can be accountable for what they do to any but to such as have Power over them, to question, to controul, to punish them) yet, with Regard to GOD, he is upon the same Level with the meanest of his Subjects ; He is under the same Obligation in Duty, (He is under a stronger Obligation in Gratitude) to behave himself well in *his* Station, that they are under to do the same in *theirs* ; and therefore, if he be failing in what is requir'd of him, must look for no more Mercy from GOD, the righteous Judge of all, than will be afforded to others of inferior Rank that are alike guilty.

By this Argument the *Apostle* exhorts Masters to discharge faithfully the Duties that are laid upon them, with Relation to their Servants ; *Ye Masters, do the same*

Eph. vi. 9.

same things unto your Servants --- knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, neither is there Respect of Persons with him. And his Argument is of the same Force to engage all other Superiors to the like Care ; for as the Master has a Master in Heaven, so has the Judge a Judge, the Ruler a Ruler, the King himself a King. And, (as we are told in Job xxxiv. 19.) *G O D accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the Rich more than the Poor, for they are all the Work of his Hands.* Therefore take Heed what ye do, said Jehosaphat, in his Charge to his ^{2 Chron. xix. 6, 7.} Judges, for ye judge not for Man but for the Lord --- and there is no Iniquity with the Lord our G O D, nor Respect of Persons.

3. If the Magistrate be the Minister of G O D acting by his Commission, and exercising a delegated Authority under him, then it must needs be the Duty of Subjects, (a Branch of that Duty which they owe to G o d himself) to yield Obedience to all those Laws and Constitutions of their Earthly Governors, which they, not exceeding the Powers granted them by their Commission, shall, in their Wisdom think fit to enact, for the Preservation of Justice, and Peace, and good Order among their Subjects ; that is, they are to obey them in whatsoever they command, that

that is not contrary to the Divine Law ; for I know no other Bounds or Restraints set to the Sovereign Magistrate's Authority but that. If indeed He commands what G O D has forbidden, or forbids what G O D has commanded, he takes upon him to do more than he has

Authority for ; and in that Case, *Acts v. 29. we ought to obey G O D rather*

than Men : But in all other Cases, the Laws of the State are to be punctually obey'd, tho' we see not the Reason of them ; nay, tho' they should appear to us not so well consulted, nor so prudently contrived as they might have been ; and this, not only to escape the Penalty of the Law, but also out of Conscience to-

wards G O D. *Submit your selves* 1 Pet. ii. 13. *to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake, says St. Peter. And ye must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake, says our Apostle, at the 5th Verse of this Chapter. And upon this Ground it is, that in Tit. iii. 1. he lays it as a Duty upon all Preachers of the Gospel, to be very earnest and frequent in pressing this Point upon their Hearers. Put them in Mind, says he, to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates.*

Nay, tho' the Laws of our Earthly Governors should, in some Instances, be contrary to the Divine Laws, (upon which Supposition the Magistrate does certainly exceed the Bounds of

of his Commission) yet this does not void their Authority ; they are *the Ministers of GOD* for all this ; or else there were none that were so, there were none that could be call'd so, when the *Apostle* wrote this *Epistle* ; and there is a Duty lying on Subjects, even in this Case ; *viz.* not to oppose, nor to resist the Power ; but quietly and patiently to suffer the Penalty of those Laws which they can't, without sinning against *GOD*, yield an active Obedience to. *Whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of GOD*, says our *Apostle*, and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation. And, this, says another *Apostle*, is thank-worthy, 1 Pet. ii. 19. if a Man for Conscience towards *GOD*, endure Grief, suffering wrongfully.

4. Lastly ; If the Civil Magistrate be *the Minister of GOD*, that is, if he acts by a Divine Commission, and all the Authority he has over others be derived from *GOD* ; then even his Authority, tho' he be the highest of all Earthly Powers, is not absolute and unlimited ; then he can act with Authority no farther, nor otherwise, than as he is warranted to do by his Commission ; And then also, the same *GOD*, the Sovereign Lord of all, who has granted him a Commission for one Purpose, may grant another Commission to another Person, for another Purpose.

I mean

I mean plainly this ; (which is not only a Supposition of what might be, but is also true in Fact) G O D has given the Civil Magistrate Commission and Authority to govern well all the People committed to his Charge, to enact and execute all needful Laws for the Preservation of Justice and Peace among his Subjects ; nay, and to him also it appertains to provide for the Establishment of the true Religion, and for the regular Exercise thereof ; and G O D has also arm'd him with the Power of the *Sword*, to cut off Evil Doers of all Sorts ; that is, not only those who invade the Civil Rights of others, but likewise such as *turn Religion into Rebellion, and Faith into Faction* ; and from Subjection to this Authority of the Civil Magistrate, or Supreme Legislative Power, no Order of Men whatsoever is exempt : He is *Supreme in all Causes, and over all Persons ; Let every Soul, says the Apostle, be subject to the Higher Powers*. But it is not within the Commission of the Civil Magistrate, as such, to Baptize, to Preach the Gospel, to serve at the Altar, to Excommunicate, to Absolve, and to Minister in holy Things. The Power of Performing these sacred Offices is granted by another Commission, and to another Order of Men ; and *they* have their Authority to do these Things as immediately from G O D, as the Civil Magistrate has his. For it was not to
the

the Civil Magistrate but, to *them* that our Saviour said, *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature*; 'Twas to *them*, (that is, only to his Apostles, and their Successors in the Ministry of the Gospel by lawful Ordination) that he said, *Go, and Disciple all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World.* 'Twas to *them* that he gave in Command, to do after his Decease, and to continue to do until his second Coming, what he himself had just then before done, when He took Bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, *Take, eat; this is my Body*; and when he took the Cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, *Drink ye all of it; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* And lastly, 'twas to *them* that he said, *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever Sins ye retain they are retained.*

Mar. xvi. 15.

Matt. xxviii.
19, 20.

Matth. xxii.
26, 27, 28.

Joh. xx. 21,
23.

Well! But what if the Civil Magistrate will take upon him to do these Things in Person?

K

Or

Or what if he should presume, by his own Authority only, to command or commission others, not qualified by lawful Ordination, to do them?

I answer, He may do so, if he will; for who should hinder him? But what he does of this Kind, being done without sufficient Authority, must certainly be done without Effect. He may do so, if he will; and if He that does so be the Supreme Magistrate of all, there is no Power upon Earth that I know of to correct or punish him for his Fault;

Eccles. 8.

But *He that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they*: There is certainly a Power above, that both can and will punish Offenders, tho' they be of the highest Rank; and *mighty Men shall be mightily tormented*.

He may therefore, if he pleases, say to the Priests, as *Corah* and his Company did to *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Te take too much upon you, seeing all the Congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them; wherefore then lift ye up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord?*

1 Sam. xiii. 9.

Or he may, as *King Saul* did, usurp the Priest's Office, when (after a long waiting for *Samuel* to no Purpose) he himself offer'd a *Burnt-Offering*, thinking himself, (as he said) under a Sort of Necessity of doing it, because of his present Distress;

stress ; and as was done by King Uzziab afterwards, when he went 2 Chr. xxvi. 16. into the Temple of the Lord, to burn Incense upon the Altar of Incense. Or Lastly, He may do, as King Jeroboam did, who made, or consecrated, by his own Authority only, Priests of 1 Kings xii. 31. xiii. 33. the lowest of the People, which were not of the Sons of Levi ; but I'm sure, if he believes the Truth of those Histories, he'll have but little Encouragement to follow those Examples ; especially, if he considers farther, that all that do the like Things, are guilty before GOD of the like Fault, tho' they mayn't be always alike punish'd for it in this World.

The Magistrate then has his Authority from GOD ; He is the Minister of GOD ; and so have likewise the Dispensers of his Holy Word and Sacraments ; They, as to the Spiritual Powers which they are entrusted with, are not the Servants of the State, but the Ministers of Jesus Christ.

There is therefore no such Absurdity as some would make us believe, in two distinct Powers, within the same State or Nation, so much independent on each other as these are suppos'd to be. Neither, methinks, should the Notion of it in this Case seem at all strange or uncouth, when 'tis no more than we see every Day in other Instances. For do not the Mayors or other chief Magistrates, in every City

and Corporation within this Kingdom, act, all alike, by Commission from the QUEEN, as Sovereign over all, without deriving any Authority from one another? And within the same City, does not the same Sovereign Power grant divers Commissions, to divers Persons, for divers Purposes; to every One of which, all the Inhabitants of that City are bound to be in Subjection? And do not all the Persons so Commission'd, move and act, each in his proper Sphere, without more Dependence on each other than the Sovereign is pleas'd to contrive and order? What more Absurdity then is there, in a King's discharging the King's Duty, and a Priest's the Priest's, supposing that neither of them does receive his Authority from the other, but both from G O D?

Neither can any such Publick Inconvenience as some imagine (or at least would make other People apprehend) ever follow from the Establishment of Two such Independent Powers; upon Supposition that they both receive their proper Authority from a Power that is Superior to them both, and that they are both subject to his Regulation and Correction; provided also that both these subordinate Powers do keep within the Bounds of their proper Commissions; and if they do not, He, by whose Authority they both act, and who is Superior to them both, knows how to lay the Blame where the Fault lies, and is able to maintain his own
Supreme

Supreme Authority over them both. For we see the same Thing every Day in other Instances ; every City, every Town has its proper Officers, and those of various Sorts, and to various Purposes ; but nevertheless, having all of them their Authority from the same Sovereign Power of the State, and every one of them having his proper Business assign'd him, they all move regularly, every one in his own proper Sphere, without giving one another any manner of Disturbance. And therefore so likewise may the Civil Magistrate, and the Minister of the Gospel do, though they have neither of them their Commission from the other, but both from GOD : Nay, so they must do, if they both act within the Bounds of their respective Commissions ; for their Commissions are of different Kinds, and to quite different Purposes ; their Businesses do no ways interfere with, or hinder each other, but rather quite otherwise. For the Priest's Power is no Diminution at all to the King's ; nay it rather tends to establish it ; it being one Thing (among others) given him in Charge by GOD, to *put the People in mind* Tit. iii. 1.
to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates. And, on the other Side, the Kingly Power is no Hindrance at all to the Priest in the Discharge of his Ministerial Office ; It may be, and it oftentimes is, very helpful and assistant to him therein ;

it is always so, when according to the Promise of GOD made long ago to his Church, (and which we have the Happiness to see verify'd among us) *Kings* are her *Nursing Fathers*, and *Queens* her *Nursing Mothers*.

Well ! But what if these Two Powers should clash ? Would not that be a great Inconvenience ?

Yes, most certainly : And so it would be, in any Kingdom, in any State, in any City, if the Subordinate Magistrates and Officers, all acting by the Sovereign's Commission, and who had every one their several Offices assign'd them, should clash, or should encroach upon one another. But the Possibility of such an Inconvenience's happening from such a Constitution, is no Reason why Things should not be so Constituted ; because however otherwise they were ordered, they would still be liable to some Inconvenience or other, from the irregular Lusts and Passions of Men ; much less is it an Argument and Proof, against Fact, that they are not so Constituted. And in Case this should happen, still (as was said before) there is a Remedy ; for it being supposed that all these subordinate Officers are subject to one Supreme Power, he will know where to lay the Blame, and will be able to punish the Offender, whoever he be, that dares to assume or exercise an Authority that was not granted him.

But

But let us see however, at last, what would be the Consequence, in Case the Civil and Ecclesiastical Officer, under GOD the Sovereign Lord of all, should clash or interfere; or should either of them encroach upon the other; and let us see what, in that Case would be to be done, by the one, or by the other of them; or by the People, supposed to be subject to them both.

Suppose then, *First*, that the Priest, as such, takes upon him to act as a Civil Magistrate. What must be said in this Case, is, That most certainly he's highly to blame for his so doing; there being plainly no such Power within his Commission as a Priest. For if the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is *Head over all things to the Church*, was not, as himself own'd, *of this World*; much less can that of his Ministers be so.

Eph. i. 22.
Joh. xviii. 26.

The Remedy therefore of this Inconvenience is very obvious; and the Civil Magistrate has it in his own Power. For seeing the Man was not, by his being ordain'd a Priest, discharg'd from his Allegiance to his Sovereign, nor made less subject to him than he was before; the Prince has still full Power over him, to deal with him just as he would, or might, do with any other of his Subjects that was guilty of the like Crime; He may amerce, he may imprison him; He may (if his Offence be what the Law has made

made capital) condemn him to Death ; and will be justify'd before GOD, and in his own Conscience, for so Doing ; Nay, he would be to blame if he should not do so : *For he beareth not the Sword in vain ; but is—a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him (whosoever he be) that doth Evil.*

Or put Case, *Secondly*, that the Prince takes upon him, in Virtue of his Sovereign Authority, wholly to prohibit the Priests in the Exercise of their Ministerial Office ; that he forbids them to Preach the Gospel within his Dominion, to Baptize any of his Subjects, to hold any Assemblies for Christian Worship, or the like ; the Consequence of this would be, that the Priests, the Ministers of *Jesus Christ*,

Galat. i. 1. *being not of Men, neither by Man, but by Jesus Christ, and GOD the Father, who raised him from the Dead,* would be still bound to go on in the Doing of their Duty ; and if thereupon he should question them for their Disobedience to his Order, it would be their Part to say, as the *Apostles* did in the like Case to the Rulers of the *Jews*,

Acts iv. 19. *Whether it be right in the Sight of GOD, to hearken unto you more than unto GOD, judge ye.* And if after this,

he should proceed farther to punish them for it, it would then be their Duty to behave themselves as the *Apostles* likewise did in that Case ; that is, to suffer meekly and quietly, the Confiscation of their Goods, the Imprisonment of their

their Persons, or even Death it self ; and to
rejoyce that they were counted wor-
thy to suffer — for the Name of

V. 14.

Christ. For if ye suffer for Righ-
teousness sake, says the Apostle, hap-
py are ye ; and be not afraid of
their Terror, neither be troubled.

I Pet. iii. 14.

iv. 19.

And again, *Let them that suffer according to*
the Will of G O D, commit the keeping of their
Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful
Creator.

Or let it be suppos'd farther, *Thirdly*, That
 the Prince (whether with or without a Pro-
 hibition to the lawfully ordain'd Ministers of
 the Gospel) takes upon himself to exercise
 thier proper Office ; or, by Virtue of his Su-
 preme Authority over all, to appoint others,
 not lawfully ordain'd, to perform it ; what
 would be the Consequence of this ? And what
 would be the Priest's Duty in this Case ?

I Answer ; the Consequence would be, That
 (as was said before) there would be a perfect
 Nullity in every thing that the Prince did of
 this Kind ; and the Priests Duty in this Case
 would be, to remonstrate to the Prince in the
 most decent and respectful Manner, the Un-
 lawfulness of such his Attempt ; nay, and to
 withstand him too, with such a sort of Force
 as the most Dutiful Son might use to restrain
 and hold back his Father from running into a
 Fire, or falling into a Pit ; as the Priests of
 the

2 Chron. xxvi. 16, 17, 19. the Temple did, when their King went into the Temple of the Lord, to burn Incense upon the Altar of Incense: They went in after him,

says the Text, and withstood Uzziah the King, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee to burn Incense unto the Lord, but to the Priests, the Sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn Incense. Go out of the Sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed, neither shall it be for thine Honour from the Lord GOD. Thus much, I say, the Priests may say and do; But if by all this the Prince will not be restrained from his Sacrilegious Attempt, I know nothing more that they can lawfully do, but only to refer the Matter to the Judgment of GOD; who did in that Case of Uzziah sufficiently vindicate the Honour of his own Institution; and will always do so, in such manner as to his Infinite Wisdom shall seem best.

Or Lastly, (for I think this is the only Case different from the Three former that can be put) let it be suppos'd that these Two Powers do direct or order contrary things: And here the Question will be, How the People (who are suppos'd to be subject to both these Powers) ought in that Case to behave themselves. And the Impossibility of the Peoples observing both their Orders, is mightily urged as an unanswerable Argument that there can't be Two such Independent Powers within the same State or Nation.] But

But why not? Why not a Prince and a Priest, each acting by Commission from God, as well as a Prince and a Father; to both whom the same Person, as a Subject to one, and as Son to the other, is oblig'd by the Law of God to yield Obedience? For neither does the Prince receive his Kingly Power over this Person from the Father; nor does the Father receive his Fatherly Power over him from the Prince; but both have their several and respective Powers over him by Divine Institution: And 'tis as possible that the Prince and the Father should order contrary things, as that the Prince and the Priest should do so. Let them therefore who make this such a wonderful Difficulty, say, what the Son is to do in that Case, and then they will readily discern what the Subject is to do in this.

Now 'tis certain that no Law of the State can wholly vacate the Father's Authority over his Son, so as to make it lawful in the general for a Son to disobey his Father; and yet the Father himself being a Subject of the State, the Exercise of his Paternal Power may be restrain'd in some particular Instances, by the Laws of the State; so as that it mayn't be lawful either for him to command, or for the Son at his Command to do, some particular things, which he, unless so restrain'd, might lawfully have requir'd; and the Son, unless the

the State had forbidden them, had been bound, at his Father's Command, to have done.

And the Case is the same here ; The Priest being, as well as the Civil Magistrate, *the Minister of GOD*, the Civil Magistrate can't vacate his Commission. No Law of the State can make it lawful for the People to deny or refuse all Obedience to their Spiritual Guides,

to those *who* (as the *Apostle* expresses it) *are over them in the*

1 Thes. v. 12.

Lord ; for that would be to make void a Law of GOD, commanding the People to

obey them that have the Rule over them, and to submit themselves :

Heb. xiii. 17.

But then *the Ministers of Christ* being themselves (no less than the People committed to their Charge) oblig'd to be *subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates, (Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers,)* it plainly follows, that their Power and Authority over their People, though, as to its Original, (that is, as 'tis deriv'd immediately from GOD) it may be said to be Co-ordinate with the Magistrate's ; yet as to the Exercise of it, in some Particulars, is subordinate thereto, and subject to such Regulations as are lawfully prescrib'd thereby.

And therefore in a *Christian* Kingdom or State (and I have no Occasion now to consider any other Case) the Priest, the *Minister of Jesus Christ*, can't, in Opposition to the Supreme

preme Power of the Nation, lay any thing as a Duty on the Consciences of the People, but what he can prove to be so from that Gospel of *Christ*, of which he is ordain'd a Minister. But the Supreme Magistrate's Authority, even in Religious as well as Civil Cases, is more Extensive : The proper Subject-Matter of his Power is whatsoever GOD has given no Order about, one way or t'other ; And every Law of his is good and binding to all his Subjects, which is not contrary to a Divine Law.

So that to know whose Order is to be observ'd, in Case they should order contrary things, the single Point to be consider'd, is, Whether the Matter about which they do give out different or contrary Orders, be a thing which the Law of GOD has given any Direction about, or not ? For if it be, there's no Question to be made, but that the Direction given about it by GOD himself is to be punctually observ'd, whosoever he be that orders the contrary : And on the other Side, if it be a Matter about which the Law of GOD has given no Direction, there's no more Doubt to be made but that the Prince's Order is to be observ'd rather than the Priest's ; because even the Priest himself is subject to the Prince in all such Things ; and if he himself can't be justify'd in Disobeying any such Order of the State, much less can any Order of his justify others in the like Disobedience.

And

And now, having spoken sufficiently (as I suppose) of the Divine Institution of Magistracy ; which was the first Point I was to speak to ; I should proceed to speak somewhat of the other ; *Viz.*

II. The gracious Design of its Institution ; *He is the Minister of GOD to thee for Good.*

And here it would be easy, if I had now Time for it, to shew, both that the Good of the People was the Design of GOD in his Appointment of Magistrates ; and also that this Design of GOD is very well answer'd ; that it is indeed much for the Peoples Good that they are thus put in Subjection to the Power of the Magistrate ; that they do indeed lead their Lives here more quietly and comfortably under the Restraint of Government, than they could possibly do without it, in Case (and that would be the Case then) every Man might do what was right in his own Eyes.

And from the Consideration of both these Things it would be easy to shew, by way of Inference, both the Magistrate's and the Subjects Duty, with Regard to each other. For,

I. If the Magistrate was ordain'd for the Good of the People, and this was the Design of GOD in appointing him to his high Office ; then this also ought to be his Design in the Administration

ministration and Execution of it. It must needs therefore be his Duty, to the utmost of his Power, to defend them from Violence, to protect them in their Rights, to preserve them in Peace ; neither to oppress them himself, nor to suffer them to be oppress'd by those that are put in Authority under him : And, in a word, to promote all the Ways he can, both their Spiritual and their Temporal Welfare.

2. If it be for the *Good* of the *People themselves* that they are put in Subjection to Magistrates, then it is plainly their Duty, and a very reasonable one too, to be contented and well pleas'd with their Lot of Subjection : And not only so, but likewise with all Willingness and Chearfulness to yield such Obedience and Submission to their Governors as is due ; and to make them the best Returns they are able for the great Benefits which they receive from their Care and Labour, by a most thankful Acknowledgment of the same.

And if I was speaking to this Point, in any other Place but this, especially on this Day of Your M A J E S T Y's happy Accession to your Throne, it would be an unpardonable Omission, not to take particular Notice of our own Happiness in this present Reign ; or not to shew the manifold Obligation that we and all your M A J E S T Y's Subjects are under, both to accept with all Thankfulness the many and great Benefits we receive from, and have now

long enjoy'd under your MAJESTY's most gracious and auspicious Government; and also to make the best Returns we can for the same, in such a dutiful Respect to your MAJESTY's Person, and such a willing Obedience to your MAJESTY's Commands, as are fit to be paid by the most obliged People to the best of Princes.

3. Lastly; The *Good* of the *People* being the chief thing design'd by GOD in his Institution of Government; and it being also what, by GOD's Blessing on his own Institution, is always (even under the worst constituted and under the worst manag'd Government) in good Measure and Degree procur'd thereby; it must needs be farther incumbent on Subjects, in Consideration of the Benefits they receive from the Magistrate's Care and Protection, above all things to return their hearty Thanks to Almighty GOD for this great Blessing; because in truth it is from GOD, as the Fountain, that all good things do come; by whose soever Hand, or by whatsoever means, they are convey'd to Men: And likewise to put up constantly their humble Petitions to the same Almighty Being, for the

Continuance of this Blessing; Prov. xxi. 1. because, as Solomon says, *The King's Heart is in the Hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water; He turneth it whithersoever he will.* And to both these Duties
we

we are exhorted by the *Apostle*, 1 *Tim.* ii. 1. *I exhort — that first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and Giving of Thanks be made for—Kings, and for all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty.*

But I have not Time now to prosecute these Points, nor so much as to mention several other Things which might be usefully observ'd and spoken to upon this Occasion.

I shall therefore conclude all with a good *Collect* of our Church ; containing, I think, the most proper Application I could make of this whole Discourse.

Almighty G O D, whose Kingdom is everlasting and Power infinite ; have Mercy upon the whole Church ; and so rule the Heart of thy chosen Servant ANNE our Queen and Governor, that She (knowing whose Minister she is) may above all things seek thy Honour and Glory ; and that we and all her Subjects, (duly considering whose Authority she hath) may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey her, in thee, and for thee, according to thy blessed Word and Ordinanc, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord ; who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth ever. One G O D, World without End. Amen.



SERMON V..

Preach'd at

St. PETER's
IN

EXETER,

September the 26th, 1708.

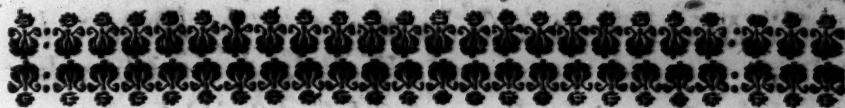


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EXETER

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To the Right Worshipful the

M A Y O R,

And to the Worshipful the

Aldermen , Common-Council,
and Citizens

O F T H E

City of E X E T E R.

GENTLEMEN,

*W*HEN I Preach'd this Sermon at the Cathedral, I had no Design of ever making it more publick: Nevertheless, I readily comply'd with your Request to have it Printed, that I might not be thought wanting in a due Regard to you, who have so many Ways express'd

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your

THE DEDICATION.

your kind Respect to me, ever since my first Coming among you.

To this I was also encourag'd, by being told, after I was come to this Place, with what Readiness many of you had Subscrib'd towards the Good Work intended hereby to be promoted, the very next Day after the Sermon was Preach'd : Which gave me Ground to hope, that the Publication of it might have the same good Effect in other Places of my Diocese.

That God would be graciously pleas'd to multiply upon you his Mercies, both Temporal and Spiritual : That your City may ever Flourish, and daily Increase in Trade and Wealth, and be always safe under the Protection of the Almighty : And especially, that it may be eminent for Religion and Piety, and a Zeal of good Works, is the hearty Prayer, of,

Gentlemen,

Your Affectionate Friend,

And Servant in Christ Jesus,

Bath, Oct. 9th.
1708.

O F S P. E X O N.

*The Rules and Measures of Alms-
Giving, and the Manifold Ad-
vantages of Charity-Schools.*

St. LUKE VI. 30.

Give to every Man that asketh of thee---.

GIVE to every Man that asketh of thee---.
But who is there, you'll say, sufficient for this ? What One Man is there of Ability, to give Relief to all those many that need Relief ? To feed all that are Hungry, and Cloath all that are Naked ? What Man is there so Rich, who, if he should attempt to do this, would not quickly reduce himself to the Condition of those who are most necessitous ; and be himself as great an Object of Charity as any of those had been whom he had reliev'd ?

It is certain therefore, that these Words are not to be understood strictly and literally ; but according to Equity, and with reasonable Limitations and Restrictions. And what these Limitations and Restrictions are, and when we may in Reason and Equity be said to discharge this Precept, which, according to the Letter, is manifestly impracticable, it will be my chief Business at this time to shew.

First then : Some may ask Relief who need it not ; nay, who perhaps are in better Condition to give, than those are, of whom they ask an Alms ; So that if it were a Christian's Duty to give to every one that asked, *i. e.* to every one that pretended Want ; the Greedy and Covetous, who can never be satisfied with what they have, would soon swallow up all, and the Charitable Christian would quickly be sent a Begging ; and that too among those, whom he would not find so free to part with their Money to him, as he had been to others. These therefore are plainly not the Askers whom our Lord here means, when he bids us, *Give to every Man that asketh.*

Secondly, Some may ask Relief, who, though they need it enough, yet are not worthy to be relieved, being well able to maintain themselves by their own Industry, in some honest Labour or Employment ; only that they chuse to beg,
either

either because it is the easiest Way of getting a Living ; or else, perhaps, because they find they can get more by Begging, than they could earn by honest Working. Such are for the most part our Wandring Beggars, Travel- lers, as they commonly call themselves, who have no settled Habitation, but rove about from one Part of the Kingdom to another, per- haps with counterfeit Sores, or Lameness, or with their Bastard, or, it may be, only bor- row'd, Children at their Backs, or in their Arms, to move Compassion ; begging from some, and stealing from others, as Opportunity best serves ; and designing to bring up their Children after them to their own Trade.

But neither are these any of the *Askers* whom our Lord here commands us to give to : *Give to every Man that asketh of thee* : Nay, so far is it from being our Duty to give any Relief to such, that it is expressly forbidden, not only by the Law of the Land, but by the Law of God too ; as you may see in 2 *Thes.* 3. 6. *Now we command you, Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye with- draw your selves from every Brother that walk- eth disorderly, and not after the Tradition which he received of us* : And what he means by the *Disorderly Walker*, he himself explains at the 11th Verse : *For we hear there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not*
at

at all : And so far was it from being their Duty to maintain in their Idleness, such *Disorderly Walkers*, by the Alms of the Church, that on the contrary he tells them, they ought to treat such as Excommunicated Persons, and to have no Company or Dealings at all with them : *We command you to withdraw your selves from them* : For so he himself explains that Phrase at the 14th Verse ; *Note that Man, and have no Company with him.* And the Command which he gives here, he tells them at the 10th Verse of that Chapter, was in pursuance of a former Command which he had given in general, concerning all such idle and disorderly Persons : *For when we were with you, says he, this we commanded, That if any Man would not work, neither should he eat.*

The proper Treatment of such *Askers* or Beggars as these, is, first to find them Work, (the Want of which is the usual Pretence, though I believe seldom the true Cause, of their going about Begging ;) and then to force them to work by hard Fare and due Correction.

But when the Beggars of both these Sorts are remov'd out of the Way, both those who do not want, and those who need not want, but through their own Fault ; there will be still Objects enow left for the Exercise of this Christian Precept, *Give to every Man that asketh of thee.*

For indeed the True and Proper Objects of Charity (and of which 'tis probable there will be always Plenty enough ; for *the Poor*, we are told, [*Levit. 25. 35.*] *shall never cease out of the Land*) are the Helpless Poor, *i. e.* such as cannot maintain themselves : Such are Infants and Children, left poor Orphans by their Parents, and not yet of Age and Strength to be employ'd in Working : Such are those, who by reason of Age, Lameness or Sickness, are disabled from working in their Callings, as they have been used to do, and their Hands failing them, have no other Support ; such also are those who being as diligent and industrious as they can be, to maintain themselves and Families, in those Callings and Employments which they have been brought up to, are not able to earn enough for that Purpose, being either over-burthened by a numerous or sick Family, or not able at all times to get so much Work as they could and willingly would go thro' with. These I say, and such like, are the Persons that do both most need, and most deserve our Charity ; these are those whom the Text speaks of, who *ask* of us, and to whom, when they ask, it is our Duty to give ; *Give to every Man that asketh of thee.* Whoever is truly in want, and not able to support himself, is a proper Object of Charity ; and to all that are such, to *every Man that asketh* of us, it is our Duty to give according to our Ability.

I say,

I say, *according to our Ability* : For this is certainly another Limitation or Restriction, that must necessarily be put upon this Universal Precept of Charity : *Give to every Man that asketh of thee ; i. e. Do it if thou art able* : For the Design of it could not be to oblige any Man to give beyond his Ability ; as the Richest Man of all must needs do, if he should relieve every one that was in real Want, even though it were by the smallest Alms ; but only to engage us, within our Ability, to extend our Charity as far as we can ; not to confine it to a few ; not to restrain it to Relations, or Friends, or Country-Men ; or to such only as are of our own Sect or Persuasion ; or to such only as have deserved well of us, or at least have not deserved ill : But whenever we meet with a Proper Object of Charity, with one that greatly needs Relief ; then, according to our Ability, we must be free in imparting and communicating to him such things as we have ; and to the same Sense the *Apostle* exhorts us, *Gal. 6. 10. As we have Opportunity, let us do Good unto all Men.*

But no one Man is of Ability to do Good unto all other Men : No Man has to give to *every One that asketh* of him, *i. e.* to every one that truly needs Relief : And therefore the Precept being so manifestly impracticable in the strict Sense of the Words : *i. e.* If it be understood as laying an Obligation upon every individual Man, to supply the Wants of every other

other Man that is in need ; it ought, I think, to be understood rather as given to *all in Conjunction*, to the *whole Society of Christians*, to the *Company of Christ's Disciples* : That the Care of the Poor should be a Common Care, lying upon them all ; and as obliging every one to contribute his Part or Proportion towards it ; *Give to every Man that asketh : i. e.* Let every one that is in want be relieved ; let none be suffer'd to perish for need : And in order to this, let all that have any thing more than they are bound to use upon themselves, devote so much of what they have to Charitable Uses, that out of that Stock or Fund of Charity, which is rais'd by the Contribution of all that are able to give any Thing, there may be sufficient to supply all the reasonable Necessities of all that are in want.

Or else, if the Precept be understood, as given to single and individual Persons ; the best Method, as I suppose, (and I think the only one) of practising this Advice, is, by every Man's allotting a certain Portion of his own Income to Charitable Uses ; and bestowing the same among those Poor, who are of his own Neighbourhood or Acquaintance ; leaving others (because it is not in his single Power to relieve all that need ; leaving others, I say) whose Wants he is not so well acquainted with ; or who, though they may have reason to ask, yet have not so near a Claim to his Charity, to be

be reliev'd in like manner by others, who know their Needs better than he does ; and who, by reason of their Neighbourhood, or Relation, or Acquaintance, are more strictly oblig'd to provide for, and supply their Wants, than he is.

And if now it be ask'd, *Who* they are that are thus oblig'd, according to their Ability, to contribute towards the Relief of the Poor and Needy ? And *how much* every one is to give towards it ?

To the First, the Answer is easy : *He that hath two Coats, let him impart to him that hath none ; and he that hath Meat, let him do likewise,* says St. John Baptist, Luke 3. 11. And, *whoso hath this World's Goods, and seeth his Brother have need, and shutteth up his Bowels of Compassion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him ?* says another St. John, the Apostle of our Lord, 1 Epist. 3. 17. By which it plainly appears, That every one that has any thing more than he must needs use himself, *He that hath two Coats,* and has need to wear but one of them, as well as he that has abundance of Superfluities, is to give thereof, for the Relief of those that have nothing, or not enough.

It is a great Mistake therefore of some, who, to excuse themselves, would lay the whole Burden of keeping the Poor, upon the Rich, as better able (in their Opinion) to bear the whole,

whole, than they are to bear any part of it. And by the same Reason they might lay the whole Burden of Taxes, and of all other publick Charges, upon them too.

But the Truth is, there is no Reason at all, either for the one, or the other of these. For it is agreeable to the Will of God, that there should be great Variety and Disparity in Men's Conditions; that some should be high, and others low; that some should be richer, and others poorer: According to a Man's Station and Condition in the World, such must his Expences be; he must keep a better Table, he must be attended in better manner, he must bring up his Children after another way; and according to the Rate of their Education, he must provide for them a larger Portion, than a Poorer Man needs to do: So that to them who are of higher Quality, and better Condition in the World, there are plainly more things that may truly be reckon'd necessary, than there are to others that are in a meaner Station; the Charges of which being defray'd, the Rich Man may have no more Superfluity, no more that he can spare from himself, than a poorer Man: I do not mean that he may not spare a greater Sum in it self; but I mean, not a greater Sum in Proportion to his Estate and Quality, than a Poorer Man, in proportion likewise to his Estate and Condition in the World, may spare to give away, with as little Inconvenience

convenience to himself and his Family. The Man that is in mean or moderate Circumstances, can't indeed give a Pound to Charitable Uses, so well as a Rich Man may do ; but he may give away a Shilling with as little Miss of it, with as little Abatement in his Way of Living, and with as little Inconvenience to himself and Family in all other Respects ; as he that has Twenty times his Estate or Income, can give away Twenty times as much. And whoever has any thing to spare, any thing that he is not forc'd by meer Necessity, to use and employ upon himself, and those that depend upon him for their Subsistence, is bound, out of that Superfluity, be it little or much, to give somewhat towards the Support of those, who have nothing else to support them, but the Charity of others. Even he that was once a Thief to supply his own Wants, is bound to labour with his Hands, to help to support those who have not Hands to work for themselves, as well as for Necessaries for his own use : For so the *Apostle* teaches, *Eph. 4. 28. Let him that stole, steal no more ; but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* And therefore it is a good Rule of Charity, though it be taken out of an *Apocryphal Book*, that was given by *Tobit* to his Son *Tobias*, [*Tob. 4. 8.*] *If thou hast abundance, give Alms accordingly : If thou hast but a little, be*
not

not afraid to give according to that little; for thereby thou layest up a good Treasure for thy self against the Day of Necessity.

But the other Question afore-mentioned, namely, *how much* every Man that is able to give any thing, ought to give towards the Maintenance of the Poor and Helpless, is a Question not so easy to be resolved; because the right Resolution of it, depends upon the Consideration of several Circumstances, which are various and mutable, and hardly ever twice alike.

For it may be, that at some Times there may be but *few* Poor, and then a small Contribution from all such as are able to give, may be sufficient for their Support: And at other Times it may be (as it was in the Primitive Church, at the first preaching of Christianity by the *Apostles*) that the Multitude of the Helpless Poor may be so great, that the whole Annual Income or Increase of the Rich, may not be sufficient to maintain both themselves and the Poor; but it may be necessary to follow that Example that was set by the first Converts to Christianity; of whom 'tis said, *Acts 4. 34, 35. As many as were Possessors of Lands or Houses, sold them, and brought the Price of the Things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles Feet; and Distribution was made unto every Man, according as he had need.*

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And again : Though it has been said already, and may be truly said in general, that one Man is able to give away as much as another, *i. e.* not in Quantity but in Proportion ; that one may give a Tenth, a Twentieth, a Thirtieth, or any other Part of his Income or Increase, as well as another Man that has a greater Income, can give away the same Proportion of that ; yet this Saying is liable to some Exceptions : For it may be, that of two Men who had the same sort of Education, who were bred up in the same Way of Living, who are of just the same Station and Degree in the World, and who have exactly the same Comings in ; one may have none to keep but himself, and none to provide for after he himself is dead ; and the other may have a great Charge of Children both to maintain and to provide for : And when there is such a great Difference in the Circumstances of those, who may be reckon'd to have the same Estate, it can't be expected that he that has so many more necessary Occasions of his own, both of spending and of laying up, than the other has, should be able to spare so much in quantity, or even in proportion to his Income, as the other may do, for Charitable Uses.

Moreover ; it may be also considered ; That a Burden that would be very light to all, if every one would bear his Proportion of it, may become exceeding heavy to some, if others, especially

especially if many others, withdraw their Shoulders from it. And this Difference there is also in this Case, between some Times and others : Sometimes there has been a Spirit of Charity visible among Christian People, a Zeal of good Works, a Holy Emulation or Striving to out-do each other in well-doing : So it was in the Primitive Church ; their Love was Sincere, and their Charity fervent ; none was then for shifting off the Burden from himself to others ; but every one rather strove to bear as much of it himself as he could, and to give all the ease that might be to others. But at other Times it may be quite otherwise : Our *Saviour* himself foretels, [*Matth. 24. 12.*] that some time before his Second coming, *Iniquity shall abound, and the Charity of many shall wax cold* : And St. Paul speaking of the same Time, says, [*2 Tim. 3. 2.*] that then *Men shall be Covetous, and Lovers of themselves*. And when 'tis thus, when a great many of those who ought freely to contribute their Proportion towards defraying the common Charge of the helpless Poor, are so far from that, so far from giving any Thing that they can keep, that they will hardly pay even what they are assess'd by Law to a Poor-Rate, 'till they are in danger of being Distrain'd upon for it ; and what they are so compelled to Pay, comes from them like so much of their Hearts Blood : It

must needs be, I say, that then the Burden must lie heavier upon those that are charitably and well disposed ; and that the same Proportion of their Income or Increase, which at another Time, if all were willing to bear their Share of the Charge, would be more than sufficient for the Relief of all that are in Want, may not then be near enough for that Purpose ; but it may be necessary then for such as are of charitable Minds, to be willing of themselves, to give *not only to their Power, but even beyond their Power*, as the *Apostle* speaks, [2 Cor. 8. 3.] it may be needful then for such to allot a much larger Share of all their Worldly Goods to charitable Uses, than in better Times it would be requisite to do.

So that all the Answer that I suppose can be given to this Question ; *How much* every Man ought to give to those that ask or need Relief : Or, *How much* every Man ought to set apart and appropriate to the Uses of Charity, must be in some general Rules ; such as these :

1. All that ask must have ; *Give to every Man that asketh of thee* ; i. e. as I have already explained that Phrase. All that ask with reason, or all that have reason to ask, tho' perhaps they may be asham'd to Beg : All that are really in want, and not able by honest Diligence, in a Lawful way, to supply their own Wants, must be reliev'd so far as their own Labour is insufficient ; or must be supported altogether,

altogether, if they are not able to Labour at all, by the Alms and Charity of others : But not of one single Man ; for no one Man is sufficient thus to relieve or support all that need ; but by the joint Charity and Contribution of all that can spare any Thing from themselves : And the less Care there is taken for a sufficient Supply of the Wants of such needy and helpless Persons by a Poor-Rate ; the more Care must be taken of them by a private Distribution of Charity ; and the fewer there are that will be perswaded to give freely, the more free and generous in their Gifts must They be, who are perswaded that Alms-giving is a necessary Duty, without which, they can't be just before God ; and for the liberal Exercise whereof, they shall be greatly rewarded.

For it is certain, that no Man was sent into this World to be Starv'd ; but every one that is born into the World, if he be able to Labour, hath a Right to be Maintained by his Labour ; and every one that can't Work, has a Right to be Maintain'd without Working ; and there is, in that ample Plenty and Provision which God has made for all his Creatures, a sufficient Portion, that is truly the Poor helpless Man's ; and which, tho' he cannot lawfully take to himself by Force or Fraud, from others who are possessed thereof ; yet they, on the other side, who are possess'd of it, can't withhold or detain from him without manifest

Injustice on their side ; according to that Saying of the *Wise Man* ; (Prov. 3. 27.) *Withhold not Good from them to whom it is due.* So that whoever has more of this World's Goods than he has need of for his own Use, is for the Residue or Overplus only a Trustee for the Poor ; and he is not a Righteous Man, he is false to his Trust , and unjust in his Stewardship, if he detains their Portion from them.

2. Another general Rule, as to the Measure and Proportion of what every Man should lay aside, for the Use of the helpless Poor, may be gather'd from those Words of the *Apostle*, in 1 Cor. 16. 2. *Let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him : Like to which is that of the Son of Syrach ; (Ecclus. 35. 10.) Give unto the most High, according as he hath enriched thee, and as thou hast gotten.* The meaning is, That every Man, whether his Gains are much or little, provided they be but any thing more than in a frugal way of living , according to his Station in the World, he is oblig'd to expend, to maintain himself and Family ; ought to lay aside at least a considerable Part, if not the whole, of what he can so spare, to bestow, as there is Occasion, and as Opportunity offers, for the Relief of the Helpless Poor.

I say,

I say, First, What a Man can spare from himself in a frugal way of Living, *according to his Degree and Station in the World*: For there is no Question, but that they on whom God has bestow'd a large Share of worldly Goods, are allow'd by him to live after another Manner, in greater Plenty, and Grandeur, than a Poor Man can do ; and in so Living, they do truly Spend the Bulk of their Estates as they ought to do, and exercise a truer Charity to the Poor, than they would do if they should Fare hardly, and live Sordidly, and Meanly, very much below their Condition, and then give away all that they so sav'd to the Poor. For in living some way answerably to their Estate and Condition, they are helpful to the Working and Industrious Poor, whom by this means they find with honest Employment ; and to a Man that is able to Work, it is a much better Charity to maintain him in Work, than it would be to maintain him in Idleness. Only then they must remember, that as there are some Poor that can Work, and whom they therefore do well to keep in work ; so there are other Poor that can't work, and so must be maintain'd by Alms and Free Gifts.

And for this Reason it is also necessary (as I hinted before) that even they that have the greatest Incomes, and who may and ought to live in a Manner suitable thereto, should yet

be *frugal* in their Way of Living, and careful not to out-spend themselves ; nor indeed to spend so much, but that they may have somewhat left, somewhat that is proportional to the Greatness of their Estate and Income, to bestow for the Relief and Support of this other sort of Poor, which can do nothing of Work, or not enough Work to earn their Living by.

And therefore if there be any (and there are indeed too many such) that having good Estates, do out-spend themselves in High Living, or lose what they have by Carelessness, or waste it in Profuseness or Gaming ; so that though they give little or nothing away to the Poor, yet they are so far from having any thing to spare, that they are rather continually running into Debt : These, I say, must not think to excuse themselves from their Want of Charity and Alms-giving, by saying (although they can say it truly) that they have nothing to give away ; that all they have, is scarcely enough for their own Use ; and that if they had as much more than they have, they could very well employ it upon themselves : For though their Case be indeed such as they represent it, yet it is their own Fault only that it is so ; and one Fault will not serve to excuse another. For if even they that have nothing of their own, but only Hands to work with, are yet oblig'd to *work with those Hands*, that they may have to give to him that needeth, as the

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Apostle teaches in a Place already cited ; much more, certainly, are they, who are blest'd by God with a large and plentiful Estate, so that they have no need to work, obliged to be so Frugal and Husbandly in the Spending it, as that, after their own Occasions are serv'd, there may be a good Part of it left, to bestow in Alms, for the Support of the Poor and Helpless.

And this Overplus, this, be it more or less, that any Man can spare from himself in a sober and frugal Way of Living, answerable to his Estate and Degree, is either in Whole or in Part, the Poor's Portion.

Sometimes I say, it is so only *in Part* ; as namely : ———

1st. When a Man's Income is raised only by a Trade, or Profession, or Employment, which in time to come may decline, wear off, or quite fail ; or for the Management whereof, a Man may in time to come, be rendred altogether unfit, by Sicknefs, Old-Age, Decay of Strength or Senses, and the like. For in this Case he is not a Wise Man (but is sent by *Solomon* to the *Ant* to learn Wisdom, *Prov. 6. 6.*) who is not both so diligent and industrious in his Business while it lasts ; as also so Frugal in the ordering of his Expences, as to lay up somewhat (besides what 'tis reasonable for him to allot to Charitable Uses ; somewhat, I say, besides) for himself, in a wise Provision
against

against these not improbable, not uncommon Accidents.

2dly, Some Part only, and not the Whole, of what a Man can spare from his necessary present Expences, may be reckon'd the Poor's Portion, in case he has some, and especially if he has many that depend upon him, not only for a present Maintenance, but likewise for the Means and Foundation of a future Subsistence after his Death. For in this Case it is but reasonable, that he should so lessen his Way of Living, as to lay up more than otherwise he needed to do; that so, neither his Children may be brought up in an higher way of Living, then they will probably be able to maintain themselves in afterwards; nor want a sufficient Stock, by the wise and diligent Management whereof, they may be able to keep themselves in as good Fashion as they have been brought up in.

But unless it be in these Cases, I think *the whole* of what a Man can spare from himself, in such a frugal Way of Living as is answerable to his Estate and Quality, may well be reckon'd a Portion belonging to the Helpless Poor, and to be in some Measure misapply'd, if any Part of it be given from them, so long as there are Poor enough of that sort to give it to; which 'tis probable there always will be.

For

For if a Man's Yearly Income be rais'd by the Fruits and Profits of an Estate ; of such an Estate, I mean, as is not wasting and perishable, or for a Term of Years, but permanent and of Inheritance ; and if his Yearly Income arising thereby, be more than he has, or probably ever will have, a reasonable Occasion to spend upon himself ; and if he has no Children to provide Portions for, either in his Life-time, or after his Decease : To what Purpose should this Man continually save, and lay up, and increase his Store ? Or what Reason can he give for his so doing, which will not imply in it, either an unreasonable and irreligious Distrust of God's Providence, or else an inordinate Love of Riches ? And certainly he may well apply the whole of this Overplus, to the Use of the Helpless Poor, to the Feeding the Hungry, and Cloathing the Naked, or to some other Works of Piety or Publick Charity, when he has plainly no Reason to apply any part of it to any other Use : He may well give it to the Poor when he has none else to give it to.

3dly, Another general Direction, as to the Quantity and Proportion, that 'tis reasonable for every Man to lay aside out of his Income for the Use of the Poor and Helpless, may be taken from the Reason and Equity of that Law which was given to the *Jews* concerning this
very

very Matter; which being a Law given to *all*, to them that had little coming in, as well as to those that had much, and to them that had a great Charge of their own to maintain, as well as to those that had fewer and smaller Occasions of Expence, may reasonably be thought to have laid no greater Burden upon any than what might well be born by all, and to have enjoin'd the laying aside no greater a Proportion of every Man's Income or Increase for Charitable Uses, than what might well enough be spar'd, even by those who had the least coming in, and the most Charge of their own to keep; which Proportion therefore they that had greater Estates, and were not burden'd with so large a Family of their own, might in Reason and Equity (though they were not by the Letter of the Law) be thought bound to exceed.

The Law which I mean, and now refer to, you may see in *Deut. 16. 28, 29. At the End of Three Years thou shalt bring forth all the Tithes of thine Increase the same Year, and shalt lay it up within thy Gates: And the Levite, and the Stranger, and the Fatherless, and the Widow which are within thy Gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfy'd; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the Work of thine Hand which thou doest.*

Now though it must be confess'd that this, as it was a Law given to the *Jews*, does not oblige

oblige *Christians*; yet as it was a Law grounded on Equity and Reason, we may from hence fairly argue and collect (as the *Apostle St. Paul* frequently does, even from the Ceremonial Parts of the Law of *Moses*) what is the Duty of *Christians* in the like Case. For,

First, If so much as this, equivalent to a Thirtieth Part of every Man's Crop; that is, to be sure, a great deal more than a Twentieth, not much less perhaps than a Tenth Part, of every Man's clear Yearly Gain or Increase (besides several other Charities else-where prescribed by the *Levitical Law*) was Due to the Poor, such a Due as could not be withholden from them without Injustice; if without allotting at least thus much to Charitable Uses, a Man could not be justify'd as a *Righteous Man* by the *Jewish Law*, it was necessary, that in order to be accounted by God a *merciful* or *charitable Man*, he should give more to charitable Uses, than he was strictly commanded to do by this Law. And,

Secondly, It may be further argu'd from hence, that seeing *our Righteousness* must exceed the *Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, not only the *Righteousness* which they practised, but the *Righteousness* which they were taught to practise by the Law of *Moses*; a *Christian* can hardly have a good Assurance towards God, and be justify'd in his own Conscience, if his *Righteousness* in this Particular comes

comes short of theirs : A *Christian's Charity* certainly should not be less than a *Jew's Righteousness*.

But after all, seeing in the *New Testament*, which is the Law of *Christians*, there is not any Thing particularly prescrib'd and commanded as to the Quantity or Proportion which every Man ought to give to those that ask ; I shall not take upon me to prescribe or direct any Thing more in this Matter. For that is true Charity, whether it be little or much, that a Man gives freely, and with a chearful Mind, and out of Obedience to God, and a tender Commiseration of the Wants and Necessities of others.

This Matter therefore is, in great measure, left to be judg'd of by our selves, after due Consideration had both of the Number of proper Objects, the Pressingness of their Wants, what Provision is otherwise made for them, and what is a competent Relief ; and likewise of the Obligations we are under to those of our own Family and Household.

And tho' in any Case almost that can be put, howsoever circumstantiated, it may be easy to say, what is manifestly a Deficiency in Charity, *viz.* When a Man that is well able to give away a good deal, gives away very little, a Trifle, next to nothing, not so much it may be as he allows himself to spend, and does spend every Year, without Grudging, and
without

without any Mifs of it, upon meer Vanities and Superfluities: And tho' it be alike easy to say, on the other side, what is manifestly an Excess or Profuseness in Charity, viz. When a Man without any Regard to those whom Nature and near Relation has made the more peculiar Objects of his Care, and Kindness, gives away to Strangers all that he can spare from his own proper Use, or all that he does not spend upon his own self; to the utter Disappointment of the just and reasonable Expectations of his own Family and Household: (Tho', I say, it may be thus in most Cases easy enough to say, what is manifestly a Defect, and what is manifestly an Excess in Alms-giving) yet in the Medium between these two Extremes, in which the Virtue of Charity or Alms-giving does lie, there may be great Latitude; and of two Persons in exactly the same Circumstances, one may give more, and for his greater Liberality may deserve to be highly commended; and yet the other, who gives less, may not be justly liable to Blame. And therefore all that the *Apostle* himself thought fit to prescribe in the Case was this (2 Cor. 9. 7.) *Every Man according as he purposeth in his Heart, every Man as God hath prospered him, so let him give.*

But nevertheless, tho' it be thus in great Measure left to every Mans own Conscience to judge how much, or what Part of his Gains

or

or Income is it fit he should appropriate to, or bestow in charitable Uses ; it highly concerns us all to judge fairly concerning this Matter ; because whatever we judge concerning it, God will judge over again, and it is his Judgment, not our own, - by which we must stand or fall for ever.

And while we are judging of this, it should likewise be seriously thought of by us ; That tho' a lesser Charity may be graciously accepted, it will not be so highly rewarded as a greater Charity will be ; for, *He, says the Apostle, (2 Cor. 9. 6.) which Soweth sparingly shall Reap sparingly, and he that Soweth bountifully shall Reap also bountifully.*

And now, tho' I fear I have already detain'd you too long, I nevertheless beg your farther Patience, while I briefly apply what has been said to a particular Occasion : And it is this ;

There are a great many poor People, who by their diligent Working are able to provide themselves and their Families just with the Necessaries of Life, Meat, Drink, and Cloaths ; (for which Reason they are not proper to be entred upon the List of such as are to be kept by a Poor-rate ; because that's design'd only for those who by Reason either of Infancy, or Age, or Sickness, or other Disability, can't work at all, or by all the Work they can do, can't Earn enough for their Support : Many such, I say, there are, who by their Labour
can

can make a shift to find themselves and their Families with mere Necessaries;) but that's all they can do: They have nothing to spare to lay out for the Education of their Children, nor are they able to instruct them themselves; nor, if they were, have they any Time to spare from their necessary Labours to do it in. The Consequence of which is, That these Children, thus left to themselves, do commonly spend their whole Time in Play and Idleness, and quickly learn of one another to Lie, and Swear, and Pilfer, and to speak prophanely and obscenely; and all other Vices which in that Age they are capable of learning: And when they grow up to be older, having never been instructed in Religion, nor it may be so much as taught to read in the Bible, they make no Conscience how they behave themselves, either in Services, or any other Employment that they are put to; very often will take to no honest Business at all, are not only not useful, but very often hurtful, in their Generation, and pass away their Manhood, and their Old Age too, if they live to it, in the same gross Ignorance that they did their Childhood, receiving no Benefit at all from their being born in a Christian Countrey, but only the bare Name of Christian.

To prevent therefore the manifold Mischiefs arising from a Want of Religious Education, and to give Hope that the next Generation

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may

may prove better than the Present; a great many pious and well-dispos'd Persons, have lately taken in Hand, to procure Contributions for the Setting up Charity Schools, for the Virtuous and Christian Education of the Children of the Poor: In which Schools the poor Children are taught to Read, and Write, and Work; and are carefully instructed, out of the Church Catechism and other good Books, in the Principles of the Christian Faith and Practice: And in some of these Schools, where the Contributions are sufficient, the poor Children are decently, but plainly Cloathed; all which Care is taken about them (they behaving themselves orderly) till they are fit to be put out to Services or Apprenticeships, or to some Employment whereby they may earn their own Living. And such Progress has been made in this good Work, by God's Blessing upon the Charity and Zeal of those who have undertaken it, that in a very few Years last past (for 'tis but a few Years since the Design first began) most of the considerable Towns in *England* and *Wales*, have already such Charity-Schools erected in them; And there is hardly a County in *England*, in which there are not several of these Schools set up (as you may see in the Printed Account of them) except the two Counties of *Devonshire* and *Cornwall*; in which I can't find that the Work is so much as yet begun. But I trust we shall not lye much

much longer under this Reproach. Nay, I hope that as we have been hitherto more backward in this good Work, than any other part of the Nation; so we shall now be more zealous in it, than any of them; and by our Speed and Diligence therein, make some Amends for our having so long neglected it.

To this End, I have already recommended it to most of the considerable Towns within this Diocese, which I hope will have good Effect: And now I do the same to you, the Governors and Members of this Capital City; who, I hope, will think it your Honour, as I'm sure it is your Duty, to give a good Example in every Thing that is Praise-worthy, to other Places of lesser Note in the Diocese.

Hoping therefore, that by what was said in the foregoing Discourse, you are fully convinc'd that it is your Duty, to devote to, and lay aside for, Charitable Uses, a good Portion out of your Annual Income or Increase: What I have further to do, (and for which I beg your Patience a little longer) is only to represent to you, what an excellent Charity this is, which I now propose to you, and consequently how very reasonable it is, that some part of the Money so devoted to, and laid by for Pious and Charitable Uses, should be bestow'd this way.

And this will appear, by considering, *First*, The Persons who are the Objects of this Charity:

city : And *Secondly*, The Nature of that Relief that is hereby afforded to them.

First, By considering the Persons who are the Objects of this Charity ; who are, without all Dispute, very proper Objects of Charity. For rarely, if ever, in Scripture, are the Objects of Charity reckon'd up, but the *Fatherless* are particularly mentioned : And *Fatherless* they may well be accounted, not only who are left Orphans by their Parents, but likewise they, whose Parents, though living, yet being in some Measure disabled from Working, either by Age or Sicknefs, or overburthened by a numerous Family, are not able to do the Office of Fathers to them, hardly to provide them with Necessaries, much less to spare any thing for their Education.

In other Objects to whom we extend our Charity, we may easily be mistaken, and we are doubtless very often mistaken in them. Every Day almost makes fresh Discoveries of such as have robbed the truly Poor, and taken the Bread (as it were) out of their Mouths, by pretending Sicknefs, Sores, Lameness, or want of Work ; or by carrying about counterfeit Certificates of Shipwreck, Fire, Inundation, or other highly pitiable (because merely providential) Losses or Misfortunes : But in applying our Charity this Way, we go upon the surest Grounds ; here we may be more confident

dent that we are not impos'd upon, as to the Objects to whom we extend our Kindness : For, however they that come, or pretend to come, to us from a-far off, may put upon us by forg'd Certificates, or by telling their own sad and lamentable Story with such Life and Passion, that being not able to contradict it, we can't forbear believing it ; Here we are subject to no such Cheat, because we know the State of our own Neighbours better, or we can with ease inform our selves, whether they are lazy or industrious, orderly or extravagant ; whether they have few Children or many, and whether or no what they may fairly be suppos'd able to gain by their honest Labour, be sufficient to support and educate them.

And particularly, as to those who are the most immediate Objects of this Charity, *viz.* the Children themselves, we may be still more certain, that we are not cheated. A strong Man may, by some Art that may be us'd, appear to be weak and sickly ; or a sound Person may, by counterfeit Lameness, or by Sores made and kept open on Purpose, appear to us unable to work ; but a grown Man or Woman, can by no Art that can be us'd, be made to appear to us in the Form of a Child : And if we see with our own Eyes that it is a Child, we may be sure that it wants Instruction ; and consequently, that if his Parents either can't or don't make Provision for this Child ; to provide for it

other ways, is a most needful and seasonable Kindness. But,

Secondly, If we consider the Design of these Charity-Schools, and the Kindness that is thereby meant to be done to such poor Children, the Excellency and Usefulness of this Expression of our Charity to them, will thence farther appear.

Now, *First*, One Design of these Charity-Schools, is to keep such poor Children from Idleness, the Mother of all Sin ; to take them out of the Way of Temptation, and to inure them to Business, such as in that tender Age they are capable of ; the blessed Consequence of which is like to be, that when they shall be grown up, they will have no Desire or Inclination to live idly, but will readily betake themselves to the Exercise of such honest Employments as they shall be brought up to.

So that what Money is laid out this Way, is laid out to the most Advantage, both to them on whom it is laid out, and to the Publick.

First, To them on whom it is laid out : For is it not plainly for the Advantage of a poor Man, to have a constant Pension given him, rather than only a Meal's-Meat ? Is it not plainly a greater Kindness to support him during his whole Life, than only for a short Time ? But now that's what in Effect this Method of Charity does to the poor Children whom it relieves : It does in Effect settle upon them a perpetual Pension or Annuity ; and that too without more Charge than it would have been,

to

to have given them only a present Relief. Nay indeed that Ability which this sort of Education gives them to maintain themselves ever after by their own Labour, is a much truer Kindness to them, than it would be to settle upon them a Pension or Annuity, on which they might live ever after in Ease and Idleness.

In this respect also, what Money is laid out this way, is laid out to very great Advantage to the Publick : For by this Means, many are brought up to honest Trades and Employments, and are thereby made useful Members of the Society, who would otherwise, very probably, have been the Plagues of it ; who having pass'd their Childhood and first Youth in Idleness, in playing and loitering about, would never after have been dispos'd, or well able, to take to Business ; and who having then learn'd to Lye, and Cheat, and Pilfer, would have improv'd continually in those Vices, as they had done in Years, until they had been cut off, it may be, before the middle of their Days, by the Executioner of Publick Justice. But,

Secondly, Another, indeed the main, the most direct and immediate Design of these Charity-Schools, is to instruct those poor Children that are taken into them, in the Principles of the Christian Religion : In order to which, they are not only taught to read, but carefully instructed in the Church-Catechism ; the Answers in which, they are not only taught to repeat, but also made to understand : They

are besides, kept constantly to their Prayers, made duly to frequent the Church, and have their whole Behaviour narrowly observ'd, in order to check the first Appearances of Sin in them, by proper Reproof or Correction.

And in this respect, the Charity-Money employ'd to this Use, is certainly bestow'd to good Purpose; indeed to the best Purpose that such Money could be laid out.

For by other common Expressions of Charity, we yield Relief only to the Bodies of Men, either putting them into a Capacity of maintaining themselves and Families by their own Labour, or supplying to them out of our Abundance, those Necessaries of Life, which their own honest Industry was not sufficient to procure: But by this we help to put them into the best Capacity of providing for another and better Life: By this we help to teach them the most useful Art, that of Living well; and the most gainful Trade, that of laying up Treasures in Heaven, which will never fail them.

Besides: Other Instances of Charity commonly terminate in those Objects to whom immediately we express our Kindness. Thus, when we give Bread to the Hungry, or Drink to the Thirsty, or cover the Naked with a Garment, we afford indeed most seasonable Relief and Comfort to our poor Neighbour himself, who is in great Distress: But the Benefit reaches no farther, (unless it be accidentally) than to his own Person; and that too but for
a short

a short time : Whereas what we bestow in the good Education of the Children of the Poor, and in well-seasoning them at first with the Principles of the true Religion, is of more universal and lasting Benefit : It does them good not only for the present, but for all their Lives after ; according to that Observation of the *Wise Man*, [Prov. 22. 6.] *Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* And the good Instructions which they receive in their early Years, and which, 'tis to be hop'd, they will retain and be influenc'd by as long as they live, are a Benefit, not only to themselves, but to the whole World besides ; for they make them better and more useful in every Relation, than they would otherwise be. And the Benefit thereof reaches likewise beyond their own Times ; it may reach to many Generations, and 'tis to be hop'd it will : For none but such as are very ignorant themselves, can endure that their Children should be bred up in Ignorance. So that they who shall be sensible of the great Benefit which they themselves receiv'd from the Charity of others, by being taught to Read and Write, and Instructed early in the Grounds of Religion, will labour and strain hard, rather than their own Children should be without the same Benefit : And, if they be good Men (and there's no Means more likely to make them such, than a good Education)

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tion) they will both know it to be a part of their Duty, and not suffer themselves in the Neglect of it, to bring up their own Children in the Fear of God, and in the Knowledge of their Duty ; according to the good Example of *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful ; of whom God himself gives this Testimony, [*Gen. 18. 19.*] *I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment.*

The manifold Excellency and Usefulness of this Exercise and Expression of Charity being therefore so manifest, I shall add nothing more to persuade you to it.

I shall only pray God, *who is able to make all Grace abound, That ye always, having all Sufficiency in all Things, may abound to every good Work ; Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, &c.*



The

787 The Bishop of Exeter's
The Lord Bishop of *Exeter's*
Letter to the Clergy of his
Diocese.

Good BROTHER,

I HEARTILY Recommend to you the *Pe-
rusal of Dr. Mosse's Excellent Sermon here-
with sent to you, and of the Account of the
Charity-Schools in England and Wales thereto
annex'd. By the former you will see (what I
doubt not but you are already sufficiently per-
swaded of) the great Piety, and the manifold
Advantages of setting up such Schools; and by
the latter, what a good Disposition there is in
the whole Nation to so good a Work; the best ap-
pearing Ground of Hope (I think) we have of
the Continuance of God's Favour towards us.*

*It was a Matter both of Wonder and Concern
to me, to observe, that in the said Account of
the Charity-Schools, there is not so much as
one Place noted in the whole Diocese of EXE-
TER,*

TER, wherein any such School hath been yet Erected; it will be our Part therefore now by a greater Zeal for this Work of Piety and Charity, to make some Amends for our Backwardness therein.

In order to which, I earnestly recommend it to you, to communicate the Contents of the aforementioned Sermon and Account, and likewise of this Letter, to such of your Neighbouring Gentry and Clergy, as you have Reason to hope will be ready to further such a Pious Design; and if you can procure any Gifts, or Annual Subscriptions towards it, then, upon Consultation with them, to set up, with all the Speed that may be, some School or Schools of this Kind, in such Place or Places within your Neighbourhood, as shall be thought most convenient.

And let not, I beseech you, the Smallness of the first Gifts or Subscriptions be any Discouragement to you, from beginning this Work: For those Schools, of this sort, in other Parts of the Kingdom, which are now the most Flourishing, had at first but a slender Beginning; and when the Work is once begun, it will quickly recommend it self, and the Charity of a few, will, I doubt not provoke very many.

My Stay in the Country now will be very short, so that I can't expect, before I go to Parliament, to see any Progress made in this Work; but I hope, when I shall make a Visitation throughout the Diocese, which (God willing) I design

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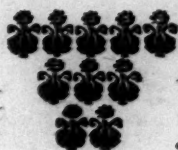
design to do next Summer, to find it in a good Forwardness. And being perswaded, that you can't any way do better Service to God and Religion, than by encouraging this Work of Charity, I must own, that I shall have the best Opinion of those of my Clergy, whom I shall find to have been the most forward to Promote it.

I heartily commend you, and your Labours, to the Blessing of God, and remain,

Your Loving Friend and Brother,

O F S P. E X O N.

Exon, Sept. 4.
1708.



T H E

The Bishop's Letter. 180

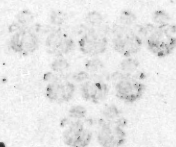
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could not but be better Service to God and Re-
ligion, than by encouraging this Work of Chri-
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inion of those of my Clergy, whom I shall find
to have been the most forward to promote it.

I heartily commend you, and your Labour,
to the Blessing of God, and remain,

Your Loving Friend and Brother,

O F S P. E X O N.

Edm. Sp. A. 1708



T H E



THE
Lord Bishop of *EXETER*'s
ANSWER
TO
Mr. HOADLEY's Letter.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Reader is desir'd to take notice, That the Editions I us'd when I wrote this Letter, and to which I refer, are, of Mr. Hoadly's Considerations, &c. the First Edition of Three Sheets and a Quarter : Of my First Sermon, that in Octavo in the Volume of 14 Sermons : And of my Second Sermon, that in Octavo of a Sheet and Half.



Bath, May 10. 1709.

Reverend S I R,



W A S in such full Business, preparing to quit my House in *London*, to send my Goods with part of my Family to *Exeter*, and to bring the rest of it with my self to this Place, that, when your Letter of *Considerations* came to my Hands, I cou'd only dip into it, but had not Time to give it a thorough Reading ; and when (soon after I came hither) I did read it all over, 'twas at first without any Design of giving an Answer to it, at least not till I should find more Leisure, and better Conveniences for it than I can have here, where I not only have no Books proper for the Purpose, but may also expect to find (as I have already done) more other necessary Business, than the Physicians will allow any Person, in a Course of drinking these Waters, to give due Attendance to. But, after I had read it over, and cou'd observe therein little else, that I was concern'd in, besides Cavilling at Words, Misrepresenta-
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tions of my Sense, and sometimes (I must beg leave to say it) downright Falsifications, I soon alter'd my Mind ; and took up a Resolution of writing you an Answer from hence, according as I shou'd be able to find Leisure and Convenience : Because I saw I shou'd have little more to do, than only to undergo the Fatigue of Writing ; the Matter I was to write about, being such, as I conceiv'd, wou'd not require much Study or intense Thinking ; especially being, before, and all along resolv'd not to meddle at all (if I might avoid it) with any Thing in your Letter, but only what relates to those Passages in my Two Sermons, which you are pleas'd to take Exceptions to ; and to clear and defend my own Meaning therein.

For to tell you the plain Truth, tho' I am, I confess, clearly of Opinion, that the Doctrines of the *Divine Institution of Magistracy*, of *Subjection to the Higher Powers*, of *Obedience and Submission to Governors for God's and for Conscience sake*, and that *Resistance is a damnable Sin*, are not only true, but likewise of the greatest Importance both to the Honour of Christianity, and the Security of Human Society, (for which Reasons I shall still, at least till I shall receive more Light, be as ready as ever I was, whenever a proper Opportunity offers, (especially on an *Accession-Day*, or a 30th of *January*) to Preach these Doctrines, in the Sense wherein I have ever hitherto understood

derstood them, and likewise, upon a Royal Command, to Print any Sermon that I shalt Preach upon those Subjects ;) yet I do not think that these are the only Truths of Christianity, or the only Doctrines fit to be Preach'd up ; nor can I think my self oblig'd to engage in a Personal Controversy with You, or with any other Person that shall ever Preach, or in Print maintain, the contrary Doctrines ; especially when I am sensible I can't do it, without neglect of other Duties more nearly, and in my present Station, more strictly incumbent on me. Besides, tho' I think these Doctrines very necessary to be frequently Preach'd upon to the People, according to that Apostolical Prescript, in *Tit*, 3, 1. which, I hope, I shall always be careful to observe ; yet since I do not pretend, (nor ever did) to say any Thing more upon them, than what has for Substance been already said, and printed too, by others over and over again ; I see no Reason I have now, or can have at any time hereafter, to trouble the World with any thing in Print upon these Subjects, (unless it be at the Command of my Prince, or at the Request of Friends) any farther than shall be absolutely necessary for my own *Self-Defence* ; which being, you know, a prime Right of Nature, must by no means be neglected, or given up. For these Reasons I have thought fit to avoid, at this time, as much as may be, to engage with you upon any other

Points wherein I believe we may differ ; and to keep as close as I can only to the Defence of what I have already Printed : And being so resolved, I am the more easily induc'd to write an Answer to you from hence, (as I shall be able to find time to do it) partly that you may not think your self neglected, which I have reason to believe you wou'd take heinously ill ; and partly because I do not foresee, when at any time this Summer I may be like to have more Leisure, tho' I might have better Helps, for writing you an Answer, than I have now. Nevertheless, being at present under the Circumstances before-mention'd, I hope I may be excus'd, if in citing Scripture I should not always name Chapter and Verse, nor hit exactly upon the very Words of the Translation : Or if in referring to any Point of History, or other Learning, I should commit any such Mistakes, as one of a very bad Memory may easily fall into.

S I R,

Your Letter, after a short Introduction expressing with what Reluctance you forc'd your self to write it, and after a general Profession of your Zeal for that [good old] Cause which you have been for some time engag'd in, begins with a sort of stating the Question between us, which you make to be, *Whether the Nature*

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*Nature and End of Government necessarily take away from the governed Part of Mankind the Right of Self-Defence ? Or Whether the Gospel of Jesus Christ hath utterly depriv'd them of any such Right, and left them naked and defenceless against all possible Attempts of their Governors ? And then you add these Words ; Your Lordship hath been pleas'd to express some Zeal for the Affirmative Side of these Questions : A notorious Falshood ! (Pardon the Word, for if I don't make it out I'll revoke it.) By meeting with which at the beginning of your Letter, your Reader may judge, what fair Usage of me he is like to meet with in the rest of it. For, as to the second of these Questions, so far am I from expressing any Zeal for the Affirmative Side of it, that, to the best of my Remembrance, I have not, in either of these Two Sermons which you find fault with, so much as once simply affirm'd, that *the Gospel of Jesus Christ has depriv'd Men of any natural Right whatsoever* ; tho' I don't know but that I may have said something like it, in some other Sermon or Sermons in my Course of Preaching : For I must tell you, that those Evangelical Precepts which forbid the *Resistance of Evil*, which prescribe the *Turning the other Cheek*, the *Parting with the Coat*, and the *Going Two Miles*, and which command in some Cases, the *Cutting off the Right Hand*, and the *Plucking out the Right Eye*, and the*

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Hating even Father, Mother, Wife and Children, Houses and Lands, yea, and Life too, do seem to me to look a little that Way. And, as to the Affirmative of the First Question, *viz. That the Nature and End of Government necessarily take away from the governed Part of Mankind the Right of Self-Defence*; I am still more confident, that I have not in either of those Sermons (nor, I believe, in any other) asserted it, much less express'd any Zeal for it. And for this, if you won't believe me upon my own Word, I am able to produce a very good Witness; a Witness, tho' to a Negative, whose Sufficiency to bear such Testimony, and whose Veracity and Credit, you, of all Men, will not, I dare say, presume to call in Question; for it is no other Person, I assure you, then your good Self, who in the 15th Page of your Letter, Line 17. have been pleas'd to write down these very gracious Words: *All that is contended for with any Zeal, is this, That there should be a Right left in the governed Society, to preserve it self from Ruin and Destruction; Which is a Point that your Lordship hath not touch'd upon.* For these kind Words, Sir, I must own my self extremely oblig'd to your Goodness; not only because they clearly acquit me from that Charge which you had before brought against me, but also because this gracious Concession of yours, that *I have not touch'd upon that Point,*

Point, will save me the trouble of writing any Answer to, I believe, near half your Letter ; all that Part of it, I mean, wherein you assert and undertake to prove the natural Right of *Self-Defence*. For (that I may not be wholly wanting in Concessions) I also am very free to grant, that meer *Self-Defence* is one of the most innocent Means, that the *governed Part* of the Society can sometimes use, to *preserve it self from Ruin and Destruction*, in case of some *possible Attempts of their Governors*. However, this being a Point, which you grant I have not yet touched upon, I am resolved, if it be possible, for my own Ease and Quietness sake, to forbear touching upon it in this Letter ; and to keep wholly and solely to the Point of my *own Self-Defence* against your Attacks ; the rather, because I have abundance of other Business now lying upon my Hands, which I think more necessary to be done, than 'tis to enter into a Controversy about fresh Matter, with you, or with any other Person whatsoever. Only, by the way, I can't but offer it to your own serious Consideration, with what Truth you cou'd say before, That I have not only affirm'd, but *expressed some Zeal* in affirming, that *the Nature and End of Government necessarily take away from the governed Part of Mankind the Right of Self-Defence* ; when as here you grant, that I have not so much as touch'd upon the *Point of the Right that is*

left in the governed Society to preserve it self from Ruin and Destruction : And likewise what good Reason you had to Attack me in such a manner as you have done, or what Provocation I had given you to do it ; when you your self (in the 13th Line of that 15th Page of your Letter) are pleas'd to intreat me, not to think that you are contending for the Words Accountable, or Censure, or Punishment, which, or the like, you seem to grant, are the only Words, or Things that I had found fault with ; and when, in the Words immediately preceding that your gracious Concession, of my not having touched upon the Point of the Right left in the governed Society to preserve it self from Ruin ; you say, that all that is contended for with any Zeal is, that there should be such a Right left. Contend then for this as much as you please, and with as much Zeal as you please ; but what Reason, I pray, had you to contend with me about it, who, by your own Confession, have not touched upon that Point ? What Reasons had you to send a Letter to me upon that Subject, who you grant, have said nothing about it ? If I have, in either or both of those Sermons which you express your dislike of, us'd some Words or Expressions not very properly, or have urg'd some Arguments in treating of the Subject I was upon, that are not so strong and concluding as another Man wou'd have urg'd, yet since my Subject was
Accoun-

Accountableness, Censure, Punishment, or whatever else you please, except Self-Defence, What Reason had you to write a Letter to me about Self-Defence, and in that to be so severe upon me for some Slips, which I had made, in a Sermon that I had preach'd about Accountableness, &c ? This I must needs say, looks like picking a Quarrel with me without a Cause. Not but that I am sensible you do give a Reason, such an one as it is, of your writing your Letter to me, (to me I say, but first to the World ; for to the World it was publish'd, before ever you sent it me) namely this, [Page 4. Line 19.] That you was sensible that my Reputation and Authority are so great, that of themselves they are thought, by many, sufficient to fix the Stamp of Truth upon what bears a Name so much honour'd, and respected : What was it, I beseech you, that you was so afraid my Reputation, &c. should fix the Stamp of Truth upon ? Was you afraid that they would give such a Currency to the Words Accountable, &c. or if you please, Unaccountable, Uncensurable, Unpunishable, as the Royal Stamp does to coined Money ? No, that cou'd not be your Reason, for you intreat me to think that you are not contending about those Words. Or was you afraid that my Reputation, &c. should fix that same Stamp of Truth upon the Notion (so much abhorred by you) that there is no Right left to the governed Society to preserve it self

self from Ruin. No; neither cou'd that be your Reason; for that you knew, was a Point I had *not touched upon.* Some other Reason then, you must think of, to give of your writing that your Letter to me; which, but for its cavilling at a few Passages in my Sermon, you might as well have written to any other Man. And till I can hear of a better Reason from you, than what you have yet given of this your violent Assault upon me, I shall not forbear thinking, that the true Reason of it was, because I am (tho' unworthy, yet by God's Permission, and the Queen's Favour) a *Bishop*: And a *Bishop* is thought by some People to be a sort of an Ecclesiastical *Governor*; upon which account, tho' other Men, Presbyters or Deacons, have doubtless, as well as I, written uncorrectly, and argued weakly or inconsistently, yet you might think it more agreeable to your own Principles, as well as more for the Honour of your own assur'd Victory, to single out and set upon a Bishop, rather than any other Man, that was more undoubtedly your Equal or Inferior.

But 'tis time now that I should begin a more direct and formal Answer to your Letter: And because in the Course and Circumstances I am now in, I must not sit long at a time, to this Work, nor can so conveniently frame and carry in my Mind the whole Scheme of an Answer at once; therefore, that I may be
the

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the surer not to overlook any thing in your Letter that is material, or requisite for me to give any Answer to, I'll follow you Page by Page, and Paragraph by Paragraph; and to save my self, as much as may be, the trouble of writing, I'll seldom, unless when I can't avoid it, transcribe your Words: But desiring my Reader (for by the Method that you have begun, my Letter too must have other Readers besides your self) to have your Letter before him, at the same time that he reads my Answer to it; I shall then leave it to him to judge, whether the Answer I make to those Parts of it which I shall Answer, be to the Purpose; and whether the Reasons I give for my not answering those Parts of it, which I shall not trouble my self to make any Answer to, be sufficient. And now to my Task.

What follows in your Letter, *Pag. 4.* after the Reasons you have thought fit to give of your writing it, to the End of that Section, I take to be a meer Compliment, and as such I accept it.

In the next Paragraph, *Pag. 5.* you say I have in my *Two Accession Sermons* given such an Account of my Judgment concerning the *Duty of Subjects*, and the *Original and Authority of Governors*, as seems to give just ground for an *Examination* of it. I grant this, and so would

wou'd any other Judgment that I cou'd have given upon these Points.

In the Three following Sections, *Page 6, 7, 8.* you pick out some Passages in those Two Sermons, which you say, you design to *make further use of*, and to shew to be *inconsistent* with some other *Particulars* in those same Sermons, or to be such wherein you *are forced to differ from me*. I am sorry, Sir, that you and I should differ about any thing, especially about any Matters of such *great Importance*, as you say these are. And I am still more concern'd that I should differ from my self; But whether I do so or not, shall be consider'd in its proper Place; and if there should seem to be some little difference between us, I hope it may easily be accommodated.

At the End of *Page 8.* you except against an Argument or Inference, which you say (how truly, shall be seen by and by) I had drawn from the Magistrate's being called *the Minister of God, viz.* that therefore *there is none above him upon Earth to question, censure, or punish him*, and that *he is accountable to none but God*; and in the Eight following Pages you offer Five Reasons against it, which I shall now examine.

Your First is, *Page 9.* That the Magistrate is called not barely the *Minister of God*, but *the Minister of God for Good*; That is, as I suppose, *the End of his Institution by God was the Good of the governed Society*; and this Point,

Point, which you are here pleas'd to put me in mind of, I my self was not forgetful of in that Sermon in its proper Place. But, granting this; does it therefore follow, that there is any body above him upon Earth, to *question, censure, or punish* him, in Case he does not do that Good to the governed Society that he shou'd do? Or that he is accountable to any besides God? So blind am I, that I can't see the Reason of that Consequence. That he is accountable, and punishable, if he does not do his Duty, I have granted, yea and contended for too, even in that very Sermon, tho' Preach'd before our Sovereign Lady the Queen; and, I believe, she liked my Sermon the better for my saying so: The only Question is, *to whom* the Magistrate is accountable, and *by whom* he is punishable; and I say indeed that it is *to* and *by* God, and *to* and *by* none else, because there is none else but God above him. And I humbly conceive, that if you will not agree to this, either you must hold, that he is not accountable at all, not even to God himself, (which is higher I'm sure than the very Tip-Top of Toryism) or else you must hold, that there is some body above him upon Earth; contrary to what you have, I suppose, more than once solemnly declared in the Presence of God, and even to God himself, when you told him, I hope in more than a Compliment, that He was *the only Ruler of Princes*; tho' I won't be positive that you have ever said this to Him since the Printing of your
Sermon

Sermon and its Defence. But let that pass; If the Magistrate be accountable to any body upon Earth, let us find out, if we can, *whom* it is to: Now in a Society there are only Two Parts, the *Governing*, and the *Governed*, as you your self well distinguish; The *Governing Part* I take (under Correction) to be the *Magistrate*, and the *Governed Part* those who are commonly called Subjects; If therefore the *Governing Part*, that is, the *Magistrate*, be accountable to any upon Earth, it must be to the *Governed Part*, that is, to his Subjects; for there are none besides them Two in the whole Society: And to say, that the *Governing Part* is accountable to, and punishable by, the *Governed Part*, seems to me, (to wiser Heads it may appear otherwise) just the same as to say, that the *Governing Part* is the *Governed*; and the *Governed* the *Governing*. For I can't, for my Life, but think, that there is more of *Government* exercis'd in Questioning, Censuring, and Punishing, than there is in being Question'd, Censur'd, and Punish'd.

Your Second Argument (*Pag. 10th*) against my Argument is this, That *Every Person in the World, who is the Instrument of Good to us, is the Minister of God to us for Good*; and that *this may be affirm'd of them without any such universal and unlimited Inference as this*. I grant it; and therefore if the *Apostle* had said, That *the Subject is the Minister of God* for

for Good to the Magistrate, as he certainly is, being at great Charges in paying Taxes, and sometimes hazarding his Life to support his Prince's Dignity and Power ; I think I shou'd not have made that Inference, tho' perhaps you might : But I consider'd (and so I suppose wou'd, any Man but Mr. Hoadly) that the Person the *Apostle* was there speaking of was the *Higher Power* ; or if you please, for so I confess I understand it, the *Highest Power upon Earth* ; and from the *Apostle's* affirming, that he, as such, is the *Minister of God*, or that he has a Commission from God to Exercise the *Highest Power*, I still think that the Inference was very just ; For if he holds the *Highest Power upon Earth by Commission* from God, and to question, censure and punish be Acts of Power, (as truly I take 'em to be) then I think it does very plainly follow, that none but God can question and punish him ; because there is none upon Earth, that is or can be higher than the *Highest Power upon Earth*.

Your Third Argument (*pag. 10. to 14.*) is *ad Hominem*, and to this effect, That the Magistrate's receiving a Commission for one particular work, ought not to be an Argument (in my own Judgment) to prove that there is none upon Earth that may question, censure or punish him : Because I my self, you say, have contended that the Magistrate's Commission is not
absolute

absolute and unlimited, but confin'd to one Purpose, viz. that of Civil Government; and also that for another Purpose the Ecclesiastical Officers have likewise receiv'd a Commission from God. Where, by the way, I can't. but take notice of your foully misrepresenting my Sense, when you say, that I have *confin'd* the Magistrate's Commission to *one Purpose, viz. that of Civil Government*; whereas, I am sure, that in that very Sermon, I have expressly asserted, that the Highest Power, or Supreme Magistrate, is *Supreme Governor over all Persons, and in all Causes*: Which I think is more than to limit his Commission to *one Purpose, viz. that of Civil Government.* But let this pass, and let us see whether there be any thing in the Argument it self that proves the Falseness or Unwarrantableness of my Inference, *viz. That the Magistrate being commissioned to his Office by God, is accountable for Male-Administration only to God, and not to his Subjects.* And I confess I am at a great loss to find where the Force of it lies, or where you meant the Force of it should lie; tho', to find it, I have read over the whole Paragraph two or three times.

One while I thought it might be design'd in those Words (*pag. 12th*) *As the Commission of the Ministers of the Gospel cannot exempt them in Cases wherein they are void of all Authority, and to which their Commission reacheth not*;

not ; so cannot it be proved barely from their Commission, that Magistrates are in a more exempt Condition. But I cou'd not discern any Force in this ; because tho' a Commission to a Priest may not place him above all Human Controul in Cases without his Commission, i.e. in Secular Cases, wherein he is most certainly subject to the Magistrate, yet a Commission to a Man to be Supreme Magistrate, and to exercise the highest Power, may well be suppos'd to include in it such an Exemption : Because no Man can censure or punish him, in any Cause, or for any Crime, and consequently not for exceeding his Commission, who is not higher than he, that is, who is not higher than the Highest, which none is but God, who gave him that Commission.

Another while I thought the Force of your Argument might be intended to lie in those other Words (*pag. 12.*) *The Magistrate (as I, you say, observe) can act with Authority no farther than his Commission reaches, consequently he can have no Superiority any further, and consequently his Superiority vanishes in those Instances in which he acts without or against his Commission.* But neither do I see any Force in this Argument : For I can grant all this, and yet still hold and maintain my Conclusion, viz. That the Highest Power upon Earth is, for any Male Administration, accountable only to God. For admit that he can Act with Authority no further than his

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Commission reaches ; admit that he has no Superiority any further ; and admit that his Superiority vanishes in those Instances in which he acts without or against his Commission ; all that seems to me to follow from hence is, that his Subjects are not bound to obey him in those Instances ; (which is what I have expressly granted more than once in that Sermon;) but it does not therefore follow, that he thereby so ceaseth to be a Magistrate, as that thenceforward his Subjects are not bound to Obey him in any thing ; nor does it at all follow from thence, that his Subjects may Controul, Censure, and Punish him for doing what he had not Authority from God to do ; for still, if the Power that was granted to him by the Divine Commission was the *Highest Human Power*, tho' he exceeds the Powers of his Commission, and so far has no Superiority, he may, and, I think, must remain to be the *Highest Human Power*, until his Commission to exercise the Supreme Power shall be vacated, or taken from him by that Authority which gave it.

And therefore I shan't need (in order to maintain my Conclusion) to prove either of those Two Points which you put upon me to prove ; whereof the First is, *That the Commission given by God to Magistrates gives them a positive Authority to act against the Ends of their Institution, and the Design of their Commission.*

mission. Now this, I say, I shan't need to prove, because without proving, or so much as believing this, I may believe and hold, that tho' they *act against the End of their Institution, and the Design of their Commission*, they are yet for their so doing accountable only to their Superiors, that is, if it be the Supreme Magistrate that is spoken of, only to God. And being not under any Obligation to prove this, I say further, that I will not go about it, and that for another very good Reason, *viz.* because I don't believe it. The other Thing which you wou'd put upon me, and say I *must* prove, is, That *Magistrates* (the Supreme Magistrate I hope you mean) *remain Supreme, even in those Cases in which they have no Authority, and in which they cannot be Ministers of God, tho' it be their Authority only, and their being the Ministers of God, that gives them this Supremacy.* But this I will not own, that in order to maintain my Conclusion, *viz.* That *the Magistrate is not accountable to his Subjects*, I have any need to prove it. For admitting that in those Cases wherein the *Magistrate* has *no Authority*, he does not retain his *Supremacy*, (good Reason why, for he never had it) so as to have a Right to exact Obedience from his Subjects in those Instances; he may nevertheless so far retain that Supremacy which he had before, as not to be subject to their Censure or Punishment. For to warrant them to

Censure or Punish their Governor, it is not enough that they are able to prove, that he has exceeded his Commission, (that only qualifies them to be Complainants or Witnesses against him) unless they can likewise shew, that they have a Commission from a Power Superior both to him and them, to question, censure, and punish him for his so doing.

And this, I still think, is well enough illustrated by the Instance I gave in my Sermon (you say very unfortunately, I think fortunately enough) of *the Mayor of a Corporation, who after his Election is not accountable to those that chose him, but to the Queen by whose Commission he acts.* You say indeed, that *the Commission given to this Mayor makes him not Superior to any in the Corporation, unless it be in the due execution of his Office.* I say on the other side, and I must believe it too, till I am otherwise instructed by such as understand the Constitution of Corporations better, that the Commission given to the Mayor does make him Superior to any in the Corporation, sleeping or waking, and whether he duly executes his Authority or not ; and that his neglect of his Duty, or Male-Administration of his Office, do not, *ipso facto*, and without further Judicial Proceedings against him, deprive him of his Superiority, during the Term of his Commission ; and likewise, that of such neglect or Male-Administration, the
Queen,

Queen, or Persons Commission'd by Her Majesty, and not any or every Freeman in the Corporation, are the proper Judges. You say further, that *the Supreme Governor* will not censure or punish any Freeman for opposing this Mayor in any Cases but those to which his Commission reacheth: Truly I can't tell what the Supreme Governor will do; for that is e'en as he pleases, or as he is in the Humour; and as to what he may or shou'd do in such a Case, I leave it wholly to the Lawyers to declare; Because indeed the Case you put is nothing at all to the purpose: For the only Question before me, or which that part of my Sermon led to, was, whether the Freemen, or any Freeman that pleases, of the Corporation, can, without Commission from the Queen, sit in Judgment upon the Mayor. You say still further, that the *Queen's Commission does not exempt him* (the Mayor) *from an Equality*, with other Freemen, *in other Instances*. And so let it be, since according to your levelling Principles you will needs have it to be so, let him be equal to the rest in all other Instances; yet still my Opinion is, that this Equality will not make them his Judges; a little Superiority, I think, is requisite for that. Ay, but, say you, *In all Cases when the Danger is imminent, Violence is allowed to be repelled with Violence, and the same Behaviour which is allowed in the Case of Equals*: And thus we are

insensibly gone off from the Point of *Censure, Judgment* and *Punishment*, to that of *Self-Defence*; on which Subject, you may, for all me, Preach and Write with as much Zeal as you please; because that being (as you grant) a Point which I have not toucht upon yet, I am resolv'd not to meddle with it now.

Your 4th Reason (Page 14th) against my Inference, is, That St. Paul might possibly in that Saying of his, *He is the Minister of God*, have some Respect to the *Deputed Magistrate*, as well as to the *Supreme*; so that consequently the Magistrates being called the *Minister of God*, is no Proof that he is not accountable to any but God. True: But tho' St. Paul might in that Saying have some Respect to the *Deputed Magistrate*, yet 'tis more certain that in it he had Respect to the *Supreme Magistrate*; The *Higher Powers*, the Person there spoken of, or if you please the *Highest Power*, being most eminently the *Minister of God*, whereas other Magistrates are so only in Subordination to the *Supreme*. And therefore if I also in my Sermon had chiefly a Respect to him, nay, and if in making that Inference I had Respect to him only, I hope I may be excus'd, especially when the very Nature of the Inference plainly shew'd, that I had at that time Respect to him, and only to him; and I verily believe that not one Man that has read my Sermon, not even Mr. Hoadly himself, ever thought that

that I meant there to speak of any other than only the *Supreme Magistrate*. And, indeed, how should he? When I my self had, in that very Sentence which is excepted against, expressly declared that I did mean him and none other. For, after having allow'd, that according to the Constitution of some Countries (particularly in Elective Kingdoms) the Nomination of the Officer, even the Supreme Officer of all, may be in the People, I then add these Words (Pag. 7.) *Even in this Case, tho' the People Name the Person, they don't give him his Authority; They Chuse the Officer, but when that's done, he is God's Officer, not theirs; he is the Minister of God, not the Servant of the People.* — And if it be the Sovereign Power of all, which, according to the Constitution, he is, by virtue of such Election, chosen to, being possess'd of that, he has no Superior but God, he has none above him to Question, Censure or Punish him. And who so resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God. Which Words I have here transcrib'd, not only to shew, that it is the Supreme Magistrate I am there speaking of, when I say he is punishable only by God, but also to let the Reader see your manifest Falsification in this Argument: For by reading this your Fourth Reason, he will naturally be led to think, that the *Unaccountableness* which I asserted to the Supreme Magistrate, was grounded only upon his being

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called by St. Paul the *Minister of God* ; Whereas indeed I did not ground it at all upon that Phrase ; but I grounded it only upon his having *no Superior* but God, and upon his having *none above him*, upon Earth, to Question, Censure, or Punish him ; and his *Superiority* or *Supremacy*, was the very thing supposed in the Case as it was put ; *If*, say I, *it be the Sovereign Power of all that he is chosen to, and possessest of*, then he has no Superior but God, &c. If this be not Cavilling, I don't know what is.

Your fifth and last Reason (*Pag. 15.*) against that my Assertion (or if you will have it so, my Inference from the Words of the Apostle *He is the Minister of God*) is this : *I must intreat your Lordship not to think that I am contending for the Words Accountable, or Censure, or Punishment ; I know none who are solicitous about them ; all that is contended for with any Zeal is, that there should be a Right left in the Governed Society to preserve it self, &c.* I call this your Fifth Reason against my Assertion, because I find it in your Letter number'd as such : Otherwise I should rather have thought, and called it, a good Reason to shew, that the Four foregoing Reasons were nothing to the purpose, and might as well have been spar'd. For if all that I had contended for was, *the Supreme Magistrate's Unaccountableness to any but God*, (as will be evident to any Man that reads

reads that Part of my Sermon, and is in effect granted by you, when you allow that I have not touch'd upon the Right left in the Governed Society to preserve itself;) and if you are not contending for the contrary to this, (as you here *intreat me to think you are not*;) nay if *Accountable, Censure, or Punishment* are Words or Things which *none that you know of are solicitous about*, methinks for Peace sake, or for old Acquaintance sake, or for some other little Reason, you might have let my Assertion or Inference have passed; and have said nothing to the contrary: But to give Four such killing Reasons, as you have done, against it, and then, as if they had not been enow, and to make all sure, to add this fifth Knock-down Reason over and above, This, to a Friend especially, was cruel and unmerciful beyond measure.

What follows in that and the next Page, is only about *Self-Defence*, or the *Right that the Governed Society* (as Subjects, Children, &c.) *has to preserve itself from Ruin and Destruction*; a Point (as you grant) *not touch'd upon by me* as yet, and which therefore I am resolv'd to say nothing of now.

And now I come to the Second Part of your Letter, (*Page 17.*) in which you take me to task for asserting that *the Power of the Magistrate is from God*, (*immediately from God*, you say, but I don't remember I us'd that

that Word) and endeavour to invalidate the Reasons I brought for it.

My First Reason, you say, is, *That the Power of the Magistrate, particularly that of cutting off Evil-doers, is such a Power, as the Magistrate can't have from the People, because 'tis what they themselves never had, nor cou'd have.* And I grant that this is the Sense of my Argument.

In Answer to which you affirm; *That for the sake of publick Good a Man is allowed to have such Power over his own Life, as to contract, that, when that requireth it, it shall be given up: Which is all that is pretended to in the Case of Civil Government.* And this, you say, is plain from hence, that, when a Soldier voluntarily Lists himself into the Service of his Country, he contracts in effect to this purpose, *That, when his General commands him, and it becomes necessary for his Country's Good, he must and will venture where he is sure to lose his Life.* Where, by the way, if I was as much dispos'd to carp at Words and Expressions as you are, I might ask, how a Man can be said to venture where he is *sure* to lose? For a Venture is properly where there is some Uncertainty; a Possibility, a Hazard, or a Probability there may be; but where there is a Certainty of the Event, there is no Venture. And yet, indeed, I must grant that you had some Reason for expressing your self after this manner,

manner, because unless you had done so, your Argument wou'd have lost all that Force which now it may seem to have : For then the Sense of it wou'd have plainly appear'd to be, as if you had argued, That a Man had Power over his own Life, because, for publick Good, he may exercise such an Employment as can't be exercis'd without hazarding his Life ; he may, for Example, be a Builder even at the Top of *St. Paul's*, or he may be a Sailor, or he may be a Miner, or he may be a Physician, or he may undertake the Business of tending, or carrying to the Grave, People that are Sick, or that have died of the Plague ; and by the same Reason he may be a Soldier ; because, tho', in the Exercise of the Military Employment, a Man may truly be thought to run a greater hazard of his Life, than in several other Professions, yet 'tis very much for the publick Good that some should be of that Employment : And after all, tho' a good Soldier must needs very often run the hazard of his Life, yet he is not sure that he shall meet with his Death in the Field of Battel. The Duke of *Marlborough* (to his Immortal Praise be it said) has very frequently run this hazard, for his Country's Good and Safety, and yet (God be thanked) he is still alive ; and long may he live, even when his Queen and Country shall have no further occasion for his Service in the Field, to enjoy the Comfort of that
Repose

Repose which he will have been a main Instrument of procuring for us all, and at last, full of Years and Glory, may he die in Peace and in his Bed.

But because you was sensible that this *might be thought not fully to touch the Point*, (truly I am of Opinion it doth not come near it) you add (*Pag. 19.*) what you seem to think will come nearer to the Case in hand; (but which truly I must beg leave to think is further off from it;) *Supposing* (say you) *no fix'd Magistrate, or General; a Neighbourhood of Persons, in danger from Robbers and Murderers attempting their Ruin, may jointly consent to go out against these Enemies.* Most certainly they may; Who ever doubted it? But then you add farther, *And any particular Man hath such Power over his own Life, that he may with Honour, voluntarily run upon inevitable Death, knowing that he doth so, in order to sustain the first Onset of these Enemies, and for the safety and security of his Neighbours.* And that he may do this great and honourable Thing, I am free to grant; but not upon your Reason, *viz.* because he has Power over his own Life; but for another good Reason that I have to myself: for 'tis but supposing (which I am in hopes you'll grant, tho' I know another Gentleman, much of the same Sentiment with you as to the Origin of the Magistrate's Power, that wou'd not grant it;) or desiring the Favour of
you

you to grant, that Almighty God has, antecedently to any *Original Contract* made at *Horeb*, or elsewhere, an absolute Power over all our Lives; and that he has somewhere said, *That we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren*; and then the Business is done at once, and the whole Thing may be well enough accounted for another way.

But I must also tell you farther, that neither does this *fully touch the Point*; and beg leave to retort upon you in your own Words, that *your Argument drawn from the Lawfulness of the Military Employment, and of a Man's exposing himself to the greatest hazard to save his Neighbours, gives the Question a wrong Turn, and is apparently of no weight.* For the Case that I had put, was of a Man that had already committed a capital Crime; Murder was the Crime I instanced in; and the Question upon that was, Whether this Murderer, being convicted by his own Conscience, might (in order to excuse the Judges their Pains, and the Hangman his Labour) be his own Judge and Executioner; and I said, indeed (which you are not pleas'd to deny) that he may not lawfully be so; and that if he should be so, he'd be guilty of a second Murder; and yet that in this Case the Magistrate has sufficient Power and Authority to Convict, and to Sentence, and put to Death this Murderer, and wou'd be to blame if he shou'd not do it; (and you are not

not pleas'd to say any thing to the contrary;) from whence it plainly follows, that the Magistrate has more Power over this Man's Life, than he himself has, or wou'd have had in your imaginary State of Nature: And consequently, that this Power of the Magistrate, this punishing and avenging Power, is from God, who has Power over all our Lives, and not from Men, who have not such Power over even their own Lives.

But it is, you say, (and 'tis your second Exception to my Argument) of *small Importance to this Question, whether a Man have any such Power over his own Life or no; if so be that he appears to have it, in some particular Cases, over the Life of others.* And I say, it is of small Importance to the Question, if he should appear to have such Power over the Lives of others, *in some particular Cases*, unless it be likewise made to appear that, he hath it in all those Cases wherein the Magistrate hath it: For if he has not, then all that Overplus of the Magistrate's Power, all that Power which He has more than other Men have, or had, cou'd not be had from them, but must be deriv'd from some other Power; and such a Power of the Magistrate I take his *punishing and avenging Power* to be; *He is the Minister of God, says the Apostle, a Revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.* And all that you oppose to this, (in the 20th, 21st, and

22d

22d Pages of your Letter) is the mention of some Cases, wherein private Men (especially if they be suppos'd in *Hobbes's* State of Nature) may, in their Right of *Self-Defence*, kill those that are endeavouring and labouring to destroy them. Pag. 20. you say, *That, supposing no fix'd Government, he wou'd be a publick Benefactor who should kill a publick Enemy.* Upon which I crave leave to ask, whether you mean by a *publick Enemy*, one that *has done* Mischief, or one that is *attempting* to do Mischief. For if you mean the Last, that is *Self-Defence* all over : But if the First, I wou'd desire the Man, before he is canoniz'd as a publick Benefactor, to shew his Warrant for what he did ; (as the Magistrate in that Case can do, being declar'd in Scripture to be *a Revenger to execute Wrath* ;) otherwise some of the State-of-Nature Men may perhaps take him to be as much a Malefactor, (in killing and slaying Men without any Warrant or Commission) as any of those were whom he had killed. And again, I wou'd likewise ask, what you mean by a *Benefactor* ? Whether only one that does a Thing which is *Beneficial in the Event*, or one that does a *Beneficial* Thing by *lawful Means*, and in a *lawful and warrantable Manner* ? For if you mean the First, I doubt you must Register, even at the Top of the List, *Judas* and *Pilate* among the publick Benefactors to Mankind : But if you mean the Last, it may be

be doubted whether the Non-commission'd Officer you speak of be such a Benefactor ; and to suppose that he is so, is to beg the Question. Ay, but *Cain*, you say, *thought it but just to fear, that all wou'd be arm'd against a Murderer, as an Enemy to the whole Race of Mankind* : No wonder at all, that a Murderer, especially of his own Brother, should be afraid of every Man he met : For a guilty Conscience is very timorous ; and I make no doubt but that many another Murderer has been afraid even of his own Shadow ; but that I take to be no Proof, that any Shadow ever had a Commission either from God, or the King, to be an Avenger of Blood.

You close that Paragraph (*Pag. 22.*) with observing, *That the Parliament hath openly asserted the Original Contract between King and People, as the Foundation of Civil Authority.* Now how this Observation, if it be true, is to your present Purpose, which was to invalidate a certain Reason which I had given to prove the Divine Original of the Magistrate's Power, I can't imagine ; unless that being not able to answer my Argument, you was resolv'd however to stop my Mouth, and silence me for ever upon that Subject, by opposing to me the irrefragable Authority of that August Assembly. For this Reason therefore I might very well have declin'd to take any notice of that Passage ; and I had done so, but that, for the Credit of
Parliaments,

Parliaments, I would not willingly that People should believe, that the *English* Parliament has Authoritatively asserted any other Original of Civil Government, than the Scripture-Writers seem to have thought of; especially being fully persuaded, that your Observation upon this Matter is utterly false and ungrounded. For tho' I must own that I never read the *Original Contract*, yet I have read the Votes, and the Act grounded upon those Votes, which you refer to; and (unless my Memory fails me very much,) there is no such thing in the *Statute-Book*, as an Assertion or Declaration, (either open or secret) that the Original Contract is the Foundation of Civil Government. I won't be positive as to Words, but all that I remember declar'd or asserted in those Votes and that Act, as to this Matter, is, that K. *James* had broken the Original Contract; to which is added, that he had withdrawn himself, and Abdicated the Government, or Words to that Effect. Whereupon the Parliament, finding no body in the Throne, and not thinking it proper or safe to invite him back who had before broke his Contract with his People, filled it with Queen *Mary* his next Heir, joining with her (with her Consent, no doubt) her Husband K. *William*: And they Two being in the Throne, and having thereby full Authority so to do, did, at the Petition, and with the Consent of both Houses of Parliament, make that Settlement of the Crown, and Limitation of

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the Succession, which we have been since, are now, and, I hope, ever shall be happy in.

And now, in requital for your Observation, and because you are pleas'd to appeal (as it were) from Scripture to Acts of Parliament, I cou'd observe to you, that there are at least Ten Acts of Parliament, wherein it is declar'd, as openly and plainly as Words can declare any Thing, that the K. of *England* holds his Crown from God, is subject only to God, and that none in the Nation have any Coercive Power over him.

My Second Reason (as you number it *Pag.* 23. for 'tis a Thing I only glance at, but don't number as a Second Reason) for the Divine Original of Civil Authority in the Magistrate, is, that *this Position* [the Sovereign Power of the Supreme Magistrate is deriv'd to him from this Aggregate Body of the People, as by their Grant or Concession] *is directly contrary to what the Apostle here affirms, viz. that there is no Power but of God. A way of Interpretation, you say, which will as well prove all Usurpers, all Robbers in Power, to have a Commission immediately from God.* Pray, Good Sir, where have I interpreted those Words of the *Apostle*? Not in that Place, I'm sure; I only barely cite the Words, I only simply affirm, that the *Position* before-mention'd is directly contrary to them. And that the Reader may the better judge, whether it be so or not, I'll here present the Matter to him in another View.

Rom.

Rom. xiii. 1.

There is no Power but of God: The Powers that be, are ordained of God.

The Position.

The Sovereign Power of the Supreme Magistrate is deriv'd to him from the Aggregate Body of the People, as by their Grant or Concession.

If the Reader does not see a Contradiction between these Two Assertions, I can't help his Eyesight, nor his Understanding: I make no Gloss at all upon the Text, I give no studied and elaborate Interpretation of it; that belongs to those to do, who would have it thought that there is not a Contradiction between the *Text*, and this *Position*.

But you say, *The Apostle's Words*, taken in the Sense wherein I interpret (I suppose you mean understand) them, will as well prove all Usurpers, all Robbers in Power, to have a Commission immediately from God. But that's your Mistake now; and by this I perceive plainly, that you don't know how I understand, or how I wou'd interpret those Words of the *Apostle*: For, to tell you the naked Truth, I understand those Words as having relation only just to that one particular Subject or Matter which the *Apostle* had been before speaking of, and which he continues to discourse of in the

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following

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following Verses ; that is, only to the *Higher Powers*, and to the *Authority* of those *Higher Powers*. I don't believe, that the *Apostle* had then the least Thought about the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, by whom *Job* was plunder'd of all that he had ; tho' he, good Man, was pleas'd to say, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*. And when the *Apostle* says, *There is no Power but of God*, I understand him to have meant, that there is *no such Power*, i. e. *no Magistratical Power*, but what is from God, or, which is all one, that the *Magistrate's Power* is of God ; and why my saying this, and supposing that the *Apostle* meant this, should be urg'd by you as an Argument, that I do believe, or that by the same Reason I ought to believe, that all *Usurpers* and *Robbers* in *Power* have a like Commission from God, is past my Skill to discern.

Ay but, say you, (Pag. 24.) *You your self are pleas'd to maintain* (you should have said grant) *that the Forms of Government, and the Persons governing, are not always pointed out by the immediate Voice of God*. And 'tis true indeed, that I do grant this ; and the Reason why I granted it, was, because it does not appear to me, that they have been always so pointed out ; and besides, I thought I might grant, that they are not so pointed out, and yet not give up the other Point, viz. that *their Governing Power or Authority is from God* :

God : For so, (as I illustrated the Thing) tho' the Queen does not appoint the Person that is to be the Mayor of a Corporation, but leaves his Nomination or Choice to them ; yet his *Governing Authority*, when he is chosen and sworn Mayor, is from the Queen, and not from the Corporation. Now that the *Governing Power* or *Authority* of the *Magistrate* is from God, I have asserted, and, I think too, proved ; if you think that the Divine Nomination of the Magistrate may be proved by the same Reasons, and from the same Texts, that is a Point I have not meddled with, but left to you to make out, when you shall be at leisure, and in the Mind to do it. That the Power of the Magistrate is from God, I argue from those Words of Scripture [*by me*] [*of God*] and [*ordained* of God] which I can't but believe to be meant either of the Magistrate's *Nomination*, or of his *Power* ; and because it does not appear to me, that they were meant of his *Nomination*, I conclude that they were meant of his *Power* : If you will not grant that they were meant of his *Power*, I leave you to prove that they were meant of his *Nomination* ; Or, if you think that they were meant to refer neither to his *Nomination*, nor to his *Power*, I desire to know what else you think they were meant to refer to ; Or, if you can think of nothing else that they can be referr'd to, I beg you to inform me to what Purpose they were us'd at all.

My Third Argument (as Number'd by you, Pag. 25.) to shew that the Magistrate's Power is not from the People, and consequently is from God, is, because the People can't be thought to have been ever in Possession of such Power, but upon the Supposition of a Thing false in Fact, (*viz.* That there were a great Number of Men living upon the Earth, before the Institution of Civil Government, which whole Multitude had then by natural Right the same Power over single Men, which is now exercis'd by the Magistrate.) And that this Supposition is false in Fact, I argue from the History of the Creation, as deliver'd. by *Moses*, which says expresly, that *Eve*, by her Husband *Adam* no doubt, was the *Mother of all Living* ; so that consequently no Man, since the first Man, was ever born, but in a State of Subjection to some Human Power, whose Power over him cou'd not therefore be deriv'd from *him*. This is the Sense of my Argument ; to which you are pleas'd to reply in Seven Particulars, to the end (I suppose) that what was wanting in Weight, might be made up by Number.

Your first Reply is not so much to my Argument, as to an Expression in it, which you are pleas'd to carp at : *I grant*, you say, *that this might possibly have been true, in case this Multitude had sprung together out of the Earth; or if they had been all created by God, at one and the same time ; upon which you observe,*

(Pag.

(Pag. 26.) that when I wrote these Words, I did not remember that I had before maintained, that the Power of the Magistrate could not Originally be in the People, for Reasons inconsistent with this way of arguing: I suppose you meant, (for that is what you shou'd have said) *inconsistent with this Concession*. Alas for me, that I shou'd be so forgetful. My Memory, I own, is very short, but yet, I thought, not quite so short as you would make it. And perhaps after all, it mayn't be so: For I might remember, that I had been before arguing, that the Magistrate's Power was not Originally from the People, because it (*viz.* the Power of Life and Death) is such a Power as the People *never had*; and yet, consistently enough, might go on and argue the same Point farther, by shewing, that if *Moses's* History of the Creation be true, (which perhaps I forgot to beg leave to suppose) the Magistrate's Power is such as the People *never cou'd have*. Certainly, my Friend, if you had not been in such haste to Write your Answer, as not to give your self time to read and consider the Thing that you was to give an Answer to, you cou'd never have let fall such a groundless Cavil at my Expression as this is. For when I said, *This indeed might possibly have been true*, What, I beseech you, was the [*This*] I spake of? Was it not the whole Supposition immediately foregoing, and which I had asserted to be false in Fact; *viz.* *That there were a great Number of*

*Men living upon the Earth before the Institution of Civil Government ? And what's the difference in Sense, between saying, [This (speaking of a Supposition) might possibly have been true] and saying, [This (speaking of the Matter of the Supposition) might have been suppos'd ?] And is there not a great deal of difference between allowing a Thing to be true ; and, for Argument sake only, granting or supposing it ? Dato, non Concesso, is, I'm sure, a Phrase that I have often heard us'd at the University in Scholastick Disputations, without any Censure pass'd upon it. But I am asham'd of this Trifling ; and therefore, to put an End to it, I give you free leave to speak to my Book-feller, that if ever he shou'd have occasion to Reprint my Sermon, he shou'd alter those Words you cavil at, and instead of *This* [Supposition] *might possibly have been true*, you may order him to Print, *This* [thing] *might have been suppos'd* ; or any other Words, that you shall think more expressive of that Sense.*

Your Second Reply to my Argument is grounded upon the Distinction, which I allow, between the *Natural* and *Political* Capacity of a Man ; from whence you argue (*Pag. 27.*) *That a Man may possibly be born free in his Political Capacity, tho' not free from all the Subjection due to a Father and Mother in his Natural Capacity ; and from thence you farther argue, that Mens being born one of another, is no Proof, that there was not a Number of Men in the World*

World before the Institution of Civil Government. To which I Answer, that tho', as the World now is, there is ground enough for the Distinction between the *Natural* and *Political* Capacity of a Subject, and between *Paternal* and *Civil* Government, yet *from the Beginning it was not so* : For then, I believe, the same first Man who was Father, was likewise Civil Governor of all his Children ; he had, I verily believe, as much the Power of a Civil Governor, as any King has now. And I believe the same of *Noah* afterwards, at least, till upon Men's multiplying on the Earth, and going out in Colonies to Places at a Distance, some part of that ^{me} Power which was at first solely in *Adam*, ^{ultim} *Noah*, might be delegated to (or perhaps usurp'd by) the Heads of such Colonies. To prove this in the Ante-Diluvian State may not be so easy ; there being not above Three or Four Chapters in *Genesis* where in the whole History of that State (after the Creation and Fall) is related : But it was very soon after the Flood, that this Civil Power, the Power of the Sword, the punishing and avenging Power, was commanded to be exercis'd in the Case of Murder ; *Who so sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed* ; which Command of God either instituted a Civil Government, or supposes it already settled : For who but the Civil Magistrate cou'd judicially put to Death a Murderer ? And who cou'd be
then

then that Civil Magistrate, but *Noah*? And if a Civil Government was settled so soon, I think I may conclude, that it has continued ever since: I'm sure I have not read, at least do not remember to have read, that it has been ever intermitted, unless perhaps sometimes for a short while, by the Power of a prevailing Rebellion; or ever wholly laid aside, unless perhaps in those *Wilderness-States*, which you make mention of two or three times in your Letter, but of which I own I do not know quite so much, as I think I do of the Ante-Diluvian Political State of Mankind. And I hope I may have your leave to say, that where^{ever} a Civil Government is settled, no Man^{beak} ^hborn otherwise than in a State of Subjection to the Civil Governor of his Country, as well as to his Parents; which is all that I think I shall need to contend for in this Place, because what you farther say in this Paragraph about Natural Right to Civil Government, may be more fitly consider'd by and by.

Your Third Reply to my Argument (*Pag. 28.*) is, that *I have mistaken the Question*; that the Thing I shou'd have proved (being what I build upon, when I say, that no Man since the First has been born but in a State of Subjection (as to his Political Capacity) to the Civil Government of his Country) *was, That there never was a Time without Civil Government*: And this, you say, I have proved only
by

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by affirming it ; You shou'd rather have said, by supposing it. To which I Answer, That, in the short Compass of a Sermon I had not room to prove every Thing ; and that this was a Thing which I thought indeed had needed no Proof ; but might be taken for granted, till the contrary was made to appear. However, to oblige you, I have now, you see, in my Answer to your former Reply, offer'd at somewhat towards a Proof of this Point : And if what I have said be not to your Satisfaction, it may perhaps be enough to satisfy others ; at least till you shall be pleas'd to oblige the World with some better Proof, that there was a very great Multitude of Men upon the Earth before any Civil Government was establish'd ; (of which, being an Affirmative, I may more reasonably demand a Proof from you, than you can from me of a Negative.) And when your Hand is in, it will be a further Obligation upon the World, if you will be pleas'd to give an Historical Account, *how long that Wilderness-State continued, and to what Publick Benefactor the World is indebted for the noble Invention of Civil Government ;* Whether, I mean, it was *Dick, or Roger, or Tumbler, or Towzer,* that first put the Notion of Civil Government into the Peoples Heads, and set 'em all agog upon an Election : For 'tis agreed, I think, on all Hands, that those Four were the principal Proprietors in the Isle of Pines, and had

had more Brains than any of their Neighbours.

Your Fourth Reply to my Argument (*Pag. 28, to 31.*) is this, *If there be no such Thing as a Natural Right to Civil Government, as your Lordship saith, then there must be a State of Equality preceding the Institution of it; and it must inevitably be founded upon voluntary Compact and Agreement, without which no one Person cou'd have any more real authentick Right to it, than another.* And this, it may be, you'll say, is such a Proof on your side of the Question, as I just now desir'd; To which I Answer, No, 'tis not so, by any Means. 1. Because it begins with an *if*. 2. Because for the Proof of the Thing contain'd in the Belly of this *if*, you bring no Reason, nor so much as any Authority, but only *mine*, who you say have affirm'd it; and therefore granting it to be as you say, that I have affirmed it, yet since you will not allow my Authority to be of any weight in any other Case, I won't allow it to be of such weight in this Case, as to be alone sufficient to determine the Question. But 3^{dly}, and chiefly, I deny this to be such a Proof, because you plead my Authority for a Thing which I never did, which, I'm sure, I never meant to affirm, in that Latitude, wherein you are pleas'd to interpret my Words.

Sir, The Truth of the Case is this: I have in my first Accession-Sermon these express Words,

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Words, Pag. 450. *This I take to be an undoubted Truth, that no Man has a Natural Right to any Thing in this World, more than to the Necessaries of Life. Whatever Right any Man has to Estate, or Dignity, or Dominion, except only over the Fruit of his own Body, is meerly Human; that is, 'tis a Right that is given by the Law of the Land, or the Constitution of the Realm.* I have also, in Pag. 451. these Words: *If this be true, that no Man has a Natural Right to the Government of a Kingdom, it remains that the only Right which any Person hath thereto, must be a Legal Right; that is, such a Right as is given him by the Law and Constitution of the Realm.* And there may be, for ought I know, some other Passages in that Sermon to the same Purpose. For the right understanding of which Words, and of my reasonable Meaning in them, I must intreat you to consider the Design of them, as apply'd in that Sermon; which plainly was to shew, that none of those who are put by the Succession in the last Entail, or Settlement of the Crown of *England*, have a Natural Right to the Crown: You will please also to consider the Time when that Sermon was Preach'd; it was *Anno Dom. 1704*, and lastly you may likewise please to observe, that I only say, in the present Tense, no Man *has* such a Right; I don't say, no Man *ever had* such a Right. Now, therefore, supposing that no Man now
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has (nor in the Year 1704. *had*) such a Natural Right to Civil Government, it don't therefore follow, that *Adam* or *Noah* had no such Right ; Or supposing that in Times of Old, Four or Five Thousand Years ago, some Men had such a Right, (a Natural Right, I mean, to Civil, as well as to Paternal Government, according to what you allow me to have said, and which indeed I do say (*Pag. 4. of my last Sermon*) viz. that *of the First Kings that ever were in the World, the Title was most probably, only their Paternal Right to Rule and Govern their own Children and Descendants*) it does not therefore follow, that any Man now living *has* such a Right. And therefore, in *Anno Dom. 1704*, after the innumerable Changes that had been made in the Governments of all the Countries in the World, (by Rebellions, by Conquests, by Resignations, by Usurpations, by Legal or Illegal Settlements, and Twenty other ways) I might truly say, that no Man *had then a Natural Right to Dominion and Power*, except only over the Fruit of his own Body : Grounding what I said, upon the Truth of a known Rule in such Cases, *Idem est non esse, & non apparere* ; for I take it, that a Right not in Possession, is no Right till 'tis made out ; and therefore, because I believe that no Natural Right to any Civil Government can now be made out, I made bold to say roundly, *There is no such Right.* Notwithstanding

standing which, I may and do believe, that both before, and also ever since that sort of Right ceas'd, by its not being possible to be proved, there has been in all Ages, and in all Countries of the World (except only in your *Wilderness-State*) some Civil Government settled; and that in every Government there is a Supremacy, or Supreme Civil Power, lodg'd somewhere or other, (in one, or in more Hands, according as the Constitution is) and consequently that no Man, since the First, has been born into the World, (unless in these *Wilderness-States*) but who was born in Subjection to, or was (if you'll allow of a Phrase, which I assure you is a Legal One) a *Natural-born Subject* of the Supreme Governor of that Nation or Country wherein he was born.

And whereas in this same Paragraph you are pleas'd to express some wonder, to find me, as you say, *urging such Arguments as seem inconsistent with my own Concessions*; by which, I suppose, you wou'd mean to insinuate, as if there was an Inconsistency between my former Concession, that *there is no natural Right to Civil Government*, and this Assertion in my last Sermon, that *the Title of the first Kings in the World was most probably their Paternal* (which is a *Natural*) *Right*; I leave it to the Reader to Judge, whether there is such an Inconsistency therein, as deserves your wonder, or was sufficient to cause you to *express astonishment*

at it. However, for the sake of these and some other Passages, which you are pleas'd to carp at as inconsistent, I can't but think it my great Misfortune, that when you was writing this Letter to me, you was not in that good Mood, in that same Reconciling Temper, that you was in, when you Penn'd your *excellent* Sermon, and its Defence : For I can't but fancy (it may perhaps be Self-love which makes me think so) that it would not have required near so much Art and Pains, to reconcile me with my self, in those Places wherein we may be thought most to differ, as it did to reconcile the Doctrine taught by *St. Paul* in *Rom. 13.* and by the Church of *England* in the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies, with the Notion of the People's being the Original of all Civil Power, and with the Lawfulness of Resistance and Rebellion, whenever the People shall judge it necessary. But we ha'nt yet quite done with the *Wilderness-State* ; for

Your Fifth Reply to my Argument (*Pag. 31.*) is grounded upon an Observation you make, that *there are at this Day, and have been in every Age, Instances of People in the unciviliz'd Parts of the World, without any establish'd Civil Government.* There are, you say, and There have been such. Well, 'tis a mighty Advantage to a Man to have been a great Reader and a great Traveller ; such an one must needs know abundance of Things,

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which

which another Man would never have thought of. But as to those poor Wretches you speak of, I pity them with all my Heart. What, without Government? Why they had e'en as good be without Rain and Clouds, without Moon and Stars, nay and without Sun too; and of all the Countries in the World, I'm sure I shou'd never have chosen to Travel into those Parts; I'd sooner have gone into a Wilderness of Wild Beasts. But 'tis very much that some of their Neighbours are not wiser than these People, nay and kinder too to them than they are to themselves, by forcing 'em to be under Government whether they will or no. No, say you, that can't be, at least, that must not be; for, as you go on, *If ever Government comes to be rightfully settled among them, it must be by voluntary Compact and Agreement.* Worse and worse still; For there must be many a Bloody Nose, I'll warrant you, before they'll all come into such a *voluntary Compact*: And if it be made otherwise than with a *Nemine Contradicente*, there will want somewhat of *Rightful* in it; for the People are suppos'd by you to be all equal, in a *State of great Equality*; and in that Case I don't see how the Men (if by a wonderful Chance they should be all of a Mind) can conclude the Agreement without a like Unanimous Consent of the *Women*, nor how they can both do it without all the *Children's* Consent;

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sent; and tho' a *tacit Consent* might be thought sufficient in those, who, if they had not liked the Agreement had Power to declare their Dissent, and enter their Protest; yet why those who can't write nor speak at all, shou'd be presum'd to give a tacit Consent, I can see no good Reason. So that if this voluntary Compact and Agreement be the only possible way, by which Government can ever be settled among them, I see no Remedy but they must e'en fight it out till Doom's-day parts them; unless they shou'd all happen to be kill'd before that time. But I remember I have read a Story; 'tis, I think, in the famous History of *Æsop*, who, I assure you, tells abundance of pretty old Stories, which (especially with Sir Roger's Comment upon them) may be very instructive. By saying which, I wou'd not however be understood to mean (and to prevent Mistakes and Misrepresentations, I do hereby profess that I do not mean) to *declare my unfeigned Assent and Consent to all and every thing contained in that Book*: No, the Book is, I believe, at least as big as a Common-Prayer Book, and I don't know what odd Passages may be lurking in some Corner or other of it; there may be, for ought I know, some Expressions in it as hardly reconcileable to my Notions, as there are in the other Book to yours; For, *whose Minister she is, whose Authority she hath, and the only Ruler of Princes, &c.* are stubborn Expressions;

ons ; and I wou'd not, by too hasty a Declaration be forc'd upon the deadly Trouble that there sometimes is in reconciling seeming Contradictions. But I had almost forgot my Tale ; It is, *Sir*, of a certain Bog-trotting Generation, which (being without a King) took another Course than what you speak of to get them a King ; they pray'd to *Jupiter*, the Story says, and He (how rightfully I won't determine) sent them a King ; First, one that they did not like, and after that another that was ten times worse : And then, poor Creatures, how glad wou'd they have been, to have been restor'd to their pristine State of perfect Equality ? But that cou'd not be, they were chain'd down to Slavery ; and tho' they had never, for ought appears, given up the Natural Right of Self-Defence, it did them no manner of Service ; they had no Remedy left but Patience. But here perhaps you'll object and say, that there seems to have been a voluntary Agreement of all these Frogs, at least to the Petition which they presented to *Jupiter* : And therefore, to be more grave, as well as to come closer to the Point ; you may remember, that the poor *Israelites* in *Egypt* (consider'd as a distinct People from the *Egyptians*) were during their continuance in that Country as well as afterwards, in a sort of *Wilderness-State*, (tho' I won't be positive that there was a perfect Equality among them, because, if there

was but such a perfect Equality among all the Heads of their Tribes, 'tis all one to my purpose;) and you may remember, that then God, to save them the trouble of an Election, and of drawing up the Articles of an Original Compact, and, for ought appears, without so much as asking their Consent, was pleas'd to appoint them a Civil Governor of his own Nomination, I mean *Moses*, with just so much Power as he thought fit to give him: And you may remember that he did the same Thing for them several times after that. And his Right to do this, will not, I hope, be disputed by any, but the *Author of The Rights of the Church*. Sir, I don't say that God will always thus interpose to settle Government in all *Wilderness-States*, (that it would be a Favour if he wou'd do so, I will dare to say;) but I mention this only to shew, that there is one, and so that there may possibly be some other way, of rightfully settling a Civil Government among such People; which you did not think of, when you affirm'd, that it cou'd not be done otherwise than by *voluntary Compact*.

Your Sixth Reply to my Argument (as you number it, tho' how it opposes my Argument is hard to guess) is *Pag. 31. &c.* and to this purpose; That if I cou'd demonstrate, that the *Authority of Governors comes from God, in the Sense inconsistent with the Supposition of a Contract founded upon a State of Equality, you*
can't

can't see what mighty Advantage I shou'd procure to the Cause I defend. Truly, Sir, I think I shou'd thereby procure all the Advantage to the Cause I defend, that I ever propos'd or desir'd ; For, Sir, to be plain with you, I think I shou'd gain my Point ; and if you don't see this, that's none of my Fault. For the only Point I was concern'd about, in the handling of that Argument, was indeed this very thing ; viz. (as you are pleas'd to express it, for I must own I did not use just the very same Words) *That the Authority of Governors comes from God in the Sense inconsistent with the Supposition of a Contract founded upon a State of Equality.* I desire the Reader to look into that part of my Sermon (Pag. 10.) and to see with his own Eyes, whether that ben't the very Point contended for : And therefore I say it over again, that if that Point shall be demonstrated, I shall gain my Point ; and I beg leave to say farther, that if I have demonstrated it, I have gain'd my Point. And is not that now a mighty Advantage to the Cause I defend ? Truly, I think it such an Advantage, that I rest my self very well contented with it, and desire nothing more.

And as to what follows in that Paragraph (from Pag. 31, to 35.) I shall not need to say much ; nothing more, than only, that the Charge, there insinuated against me, is utterly false and groundless ; for I never affirm'd, (which is all

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that in those Pages you offer to disprove) *That the Authority which the Magistrate has from God is such as commissions him, if he pleases, to ruin his Subjects.* Yes, you say, I have affirm'd, (and for that we must go back to the Sermon in 1704.) That it is in the Power of the Supreme Legislative Authority to make what Alterations it pleases in the Form and Manner of the Government: And that I have said somewhat to that purpose I grant; but I am sure I never said, that the Legislators may lawfully and warrantably exercise this Power to the Ruin of their Subjects. I might say that a Change made by the Legislators, in the Form and Manner of a Government, is as regularly made, as any such Change can be made; and that, being made, it is so far valid as to bind the Subjects: But I'm sure I did not say, that every such Change, only for its being made by the Supreme Legislative Power, must needs have been necessary, just, and reasonable in itself. I might say, that the whole Legislative Power might make such a Change: but I'm sure I did not say, that, in case the Power be in more Hands than One, (as with us it is) one Part of the Legislative Power, without the Consent, and against the Will of the other Part, might regularly make such a Change. I might say, that the Subjects of any State, supposing them to be Subjects and not *Sovereigns*, (which you, grounding your Notion upon a Supposition that

that all Governments arose from Election of the People, and that in such Election they always reserv'd to themselves a Sovereign Power over their Elected Governors, do suppose them to be ; I might, I say, affirm, that the Subjects of a State) are bound to acquiesce in any Alteration in the Manner of Government, made by the Sovereign Legislative Power ; and have no Appeal left but to God, the only Ruler of Princes, and Supreme Governor of the World : But I'm sure I did not say, that the Supreme Legislative Power can never aggrieve its Subjects, or that it can never make any Alteration in the Manner of Government, or the Constitution, contrary to the Will of God, or that it has Commission from God to make any such Alteration. I appeal to the Reader, (desiring him first to read over carefully and attentively all that Part of my Sermon in 1704. which you refer to) whether I have affirm'd any thing more in that Sermon, than what I have now allow'd, that I did say or might say, and be reasonably suppos'd to mean. And therefore whereas (besides some other scurvy Hints elsewhere in that Paragraph, and indeed throughout your whole Letter) you have directly charg'd me (*Pag. 33, 34.*) with saying, in effect, *That a King, tied by the Constitution to rule according to the establish'd Laws, has yet a Commission from God to do otherwise ; that being (as in Elective Kingdoms) chosen only for his Life, he has immediately*

diately Authority from God to change, by his own Act only, this Elective into a Hereditary Kingdom; and that the Parliament (according to the Stile of those Times when Ordinances of Parliament were in Fashion; for you add) chosen by the People to main our Constitution, and enact wholesome Laws (that is, the House of Commons only; without King, and House of Lords, who are not among us chosen by the People) receive immediately from God Authority to ruin it, if they think fit, and to consent to the turning it into an Absolute Monarchy, nay to the subjecting it to the King of France, or of any other Country; and that the People are in a State of Damnation, unless they meekly submit to all this, &c. Whereas, I say, you do there charge me with having effectually affirm'd all this, and much more too. in that Sermon, I can do no more at present, than only deny the Charge, and plead not guilty; referring my self to be try'd by God and my Country; and allowing any Jury of Twelve good Men and true to be that Country, not excepting against any one Person's being on the Pannel, but only Mr. Benjamin Hoadly, Rector of St. Peter's Poor: Till which Tryal shall be over, I desire you to suspend your Wonder at what you call my astonishing Positions, and in the mean time see what better Work you can make of it. The Questions, Sir, are, or may, I think, be reduc'd to these Two. 1. Whether the Modus or Form of Government, being suppos'd to be a Humane

2 Humane Constitution, is alterable by any Humane Power whatsoever ; and, 2. If, in the Nature of the Thing, it be alterable, what Humane Power it is that can most regularly make such Alteration ; *i. e.* whether the Legislative Power (wherever lodg'd) may do it alone ; or whether the Governed Part can do it by themselves ; or, whether, before any such Alteration, can be made, (I say *any such Alteration*, for the same Power that must make the Alteration, must likewise judge of what weight and consequence the Alteration is ; whether I say, before any such Alteration can be regularly and validly made) the whole Magazine of Original Power must be brought together, so as that not the least Prerogative can be taken from, or added to the Crown, nor the least Liberty taken from, or granted to the Subject, without summoning all the People, great, and little, Men, Women, and Children, Tag, Rag, and Bobtail, to meet together upon *Salisbury Plain*, in such manner as they did, when they first rose up out of the Natural State of *great Equality*. And if, in the Resolution of their Questions, you do not in the main fall in with me, and say, that it is in the Legislative Power, wherever lodg'd, to make such Alterations ; and that they who have that Power are the proper Judges what Alterations are necessary and reasonable ; and that 'tis but fit that their Resolutions and Judgment should
be

be acquiesc'd in by all that are subject to their Legislature ; I much fear you will be forc'd to advance some Positions much more astonishing, than any that I have really advanc'd. Not but that after all, there may be some difference (if you shou'd come over to me in this Point) remaining between us, about the Proprietors of this Legislative Power ; who, *I may think*, are, in some Governments only the King ; in others, only the Senate ; in our own, King, Lords, and Commons ; and who, *you may think*, were, are, and ever unalterably must be, in all Constitutions, the Coblers and Tinkers, at least in common with the Gentle-Folks of the Highest Rank ; because Time was (when *Adam* delv'd, and *Eve* Spun) when they were all Coblers and Tinkers, Gardiners, and Spinsters, or not one whit better. And if indeed the Propriety of Sovereign Power be wholly, solely, and unalienably in the Populace, then I likewise must grant to you, even according to my own Principles, that the Power of making any Alterations in the Manner of the Government, is only in them ; and that there is nothing else needful to make all the Scepters and Crowns in the World tumble down at once, to abolish all Senates, and dissolve all Parliaments, but only for them, when *Legion* is met together upon the Plain, to say the Word, *Gentlemen, as ye were*. And yet before I grant that, I'll take a little time to enquire,

quire, whether in making the late Happy Union between the Two Nations, every Boor's and Highlander's Vote was ask'd, and given, before it was establish'd ; and whether in Case there was *one* Dissenter, and tho' the Electors did not expressly Commission the Elected to treat of, and consent to a Union, it be not however on all hands agreed, that *all* stand bound by the Legislature, tho' in so great an an Alteration of the Constitution of both Kingdoms.

Your Seventh and last Reply to my Argument (*Pag. 35, 36, 37.*) is only a Proposal of your own Scheme of the Original of Civil Government ; which, so far as it is contrary to what I have asserted in my Sermon, has been already consider'd ; and to which, so far as it maintains the Natural Right of *Self-Defence*, I have promis'd (having said nothing of it before) to say nothing now. And therefore whereas you say, *From the whole I think it evident, that the Magistrate hath no Authority, properly speaking, but what the whole Community, or Governed Society, have in themselves, supposing no Magistrate, and consequently none but what may be transferr'd to him by the Govern'd Society ;* I beg leave to say, on the other side ; *From the whole I think it is evident, that the Magistrate hath some Authority, properly speaking, (I have instanc'd in that of judging, and putting to death*
in

in cold Blood) *which the whole Community or Governed Society have not in themselves, supposing no Magistrate, and which consequently cou'd not be transferr'd to him by the Governed Society.*

The 3d Part of your Letter is wholly spent in Proving, that St. Paul's Words are applicable to the Office of Government in General, *i. e.* to all Governors, Subordinate as well as Supreme: With all my heart, Sir; only, if all Governors are there spoken of, I wou'd not have it thought, that the Supreme Governor of all was meant to be excepted; I can't think it likely that St. Paul, writing to Rome upon this Subject, never so much as thought of the great Governor that lived there, and had his Title from thence; and that's all I thought of in my Sermon. These are my very Words, *With Regard to them*, (*i. e.* the Roman Emperors) *for it must have been with a special Regard to the Emperor then Reigning, whether it was Claudius or Nero, both of them very bad ones, he says, Whosoever resisteth, &c.* Pray observe, I don't say, *with Regard to them only*, but, *with a special Regard to them*; and I say also to *them*, and not to *him*: I don't therefore so positively confine the Apostle's Discourse to Nero, or to any one particular bad Emperor; I only suppose, that if a bad Emperor was at that time Reigning, (I add now, if any bad Emperor had then Reigned within the Memory of

of Man, or might possibly Reign at any time before the End of the World) it is not likely that the *Apostle*, writing upon this Subject in an Epistle design'd for the Instruction of Christians in all Ages, shou'd not have that Case in his Eye. But I never suppos'd but that he might think of a Pro-consul as well as of an Emperor; of *Pilate*, *Felix* or *Festus*, as well as of *Nero*; and of a good Governor as well as of a bad one. Therefore, pray, Good, Sir, don't be so very angry about this matter.

And now I come to the 4th Part of your Letter; to which, and to the Conclusion (*Pag. 40 to 52.*) I shall need to write very little in Answer; because most of this Part of your Letter is about Subjects which I have said nothing of in my Two Accession Sermons; as *Self-Preservation*, *Self-Defence*, *The Madness of a Prince or a Father*; *What Steps were taken in the Revolution*; *What Ground it stands upon*; *That there were more Heads and Hands engag'd in the Revolution, than in the Murder of King Charles the First*; *that it has been follow'd by a long and expensive War*; *That Rebellions have sometimes had beneficial Consequences*; *That some have gone further than others in endeavouring to reconcile Men to the present Constitution*; *That they are not to be blamed who go farthest in this good Work*; *That Foundations are not to be Undermin'd*; and Twenty other such Subjects, about which
you

you are pleas'd to shew your Reading, and exercise your Reasoning, but which (although your Letter about them is written to me) I can yet think my self under no Obligation to write about to you. Nor had I, perhaps, taken the Trouble at a Time so inconvenient and unreasonable, of writing so much to you as I have already done, but only that by your repeated Complaints (P. 10. and 51.) of your former Book's not being Answer'd, I apprehend that you would have complain'd much more, in Case your Letter of *Considerations* had not been at all consider'd, not even by the Person you sent it to. Not but that for my not Answering your present Letter, if I had not done it, as well as for no body's having thought fit to write an Answer to your *Measures of Obedience*, I cou'd, if I was put to it, give Reasons more than one; But they are very scurvy ones, and therefore I won't mention them.

There are but Two Things in all that Part of your Letter, from *Pag. 40.* to the End, which I can think my self at all oblig'd to take notice of.

One is (*Pag. 40. viz.*) the Exception you take to my Third Inference, and this Passage therein in particular; *Tho' the Laws of our Earthly Governors shou'd in some Instances be contrary to the Divine Laws (upon which Supposition the Magistrate does certainly exceed*

ceed the Bounds of his Commission) yet this does not void their Authority; They are the Ministers of God for all this: Whereupon you immediately ask this Question; *In what, I beseech you?* But before you had ask'd me this Question, you might have read on to the End of the Sentence? Or else there were none that were so, there were none that cou'd be call'd so, when the Apostle wrote this Epistle: And then have answer'd a few Questions which those Words did, by Implication, put to any Person that shou'd be in the mind to take Exceptions to the foregoing Passage; as namely, *Who* was the Minister of God when St. Paul wrote that Epistle; Whether there was then any such Person, or but One, or more than One; Whether the Laws of the Empire (however they might not be, by every Governor, Chief and Subordinate, always rigidly executed) were not in direct opposition to Christianity; Whether this and other general Discourses of St. Paul, and the like of St. Peter, about Subjection to the Higher Powers, to Principalities, and Powers, to the King as Supreme, and unto Governors as sent by him, were designed for the Use of Christians only during the first Five Years of Nero's Reign, and whenever such another Calm shou'd happen; and the like. And for your Help in answering these Questions, as they have relation to that Passage in my Sermon which you find fault with, you might have

have gone to the next Lawyer, and ask'd him, Whether a Mayor of a Corporation (my beloved, however *unfortunate* Instance) and a Justice of the Peace, acting by the Queen's Commission, are, *ipso facto*, outed of their Office and Commission, in Case they do, at any time, any one Thing, not warranted by their Commission? And likewise what other Legal Remedy, any Subject, that thinks himself aggriev'd by any such Officer, has against such Officer, besides appealing to some superior Officer, or Court, or to the Queen's Majesty? For I (ignorant as I am in the Laws) am apt to think, that, if in such Case, the Person thinking himself aggriev'd, shou'd Cudgel the Mayor, run upon the Justice with his drawn Sword, the next neighbouring Justice, or, if he shou'd not be in the way, this very Mayor or Justice, might warrantably lay the Man by the Heels, and bind him to answer for what he had done, as for a high Misdemeanor, at the next Assizes. And I am further of Opinion, that the learned Judges upon the Bench wou'd allow such Commitment to be good; tho' perhaps at the same time they'd reprimand the Mayor or Justice, for giving the Man such Provocation to fly in the Face of Authority.

And now to your *Question*; In what, say you, are *Magistrates the Ministers of God*, when they make Laws contrary to the Divine Laws, and exceed the Bounds of their Commission?

mission? Why, Sir, my humble Opinion is, that, tho' as bad Magistrates they transgress the Rules which God had given them to govern by, yet as Magistrates or Governors they are still the Ministers of God: Just as a Priest is the Ecclesiastical Minister of God, and all Priestly Acts done by him are Valid, and the People are bound to hearken to him, and obey him in all that he teaches agreeably to the Doctrine of the Gospel; altho' in some one or more Sermons he shou'd (as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* did of old, and some others have done since) *make void the Law of God*, by teaching the People, not to *render to Cæsar the Things that are Cæsars*, and suffering Men in some Cases *no more to Honour their Father and Mother*. Nay, and my Opinion still further is, that they are actually Priests, and Ministers of Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace, even at the very Time, that they exceed the Bounds of their Commission, and are Preaching up Resistance and Rebellion. And this is all the Answer to this Question that I am at present at leisure to give; because it wou'd take up as much Paper to say all that might be proper to be said upon this Subject, as I have already us'd in the foregoing Letter: And besides it is a very good Subject, and I have a mind to keep it, perhaps, for another Accession-Sermon. However, that I mayn't too much disappoint you, besides what has been already said, I'll

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return you another short Answer to it out of the *Whole Duty of Man*, wherein I find, and you may read these Words:

Whole Duty of Man. Sund. xiv. §. 5. We are to pay them Obedience. This is likewise strictly charged by the Apostle, 1 Pet. 2.

13. Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake, whether it to be to the King as Supreme, or unto Governors as those that are sent by him. *We owe such an Obedience to the Supreme Power, that whoever is authorized by him, we are to submit to.* And St. Paul likewise is most full to this Purpose, Rom. 13. 1. Let every Soul be subject to the higher Power : And again, Verse 2. Whosoever resisteth the Powers, resisteth the Ordinance of God. And 'tis observable that those Precepts were given, at a Time, when these Powers were Heathens, and cruel Persecutors of Christianity ; to shew us, that no Pretence of the Wickedness of our Rulers can free us of this Duty. An Obedience we must pay either Active or Passive : The Active in the Case of all lawful Commands ; that is, whenever the Magistrate commands something, which is not contrary to some Command of God, we are then bound to act according to that Command of the Magistrate, to do the Thing he requires. But when he enjoins any Thing contrary to what God hath commanded, we are not then to pay him this active Obedience ; we may, nay we must

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must refuse thus to act, (yet here we must be very well assured that the Thing is so contrary, and not pretend Conscience for a Cloak of Stubbornness) we are in that Case to obey God rather than Man. But even this is a Season for the Passive Obedience; we must patiently suffer what he inflicts on us for such Refusal, and not, to secure our selves, rise up against him. For who can stretch his Hand against the Lord's Anointed, and be guiltless? says David to Abishai, 1 Sam. 26. 9. And that at a Time when David was under a great Persecution from Saul, may, had also the Assurance of the Kingdom after him. And St. Paul's Sentence in this Case is most heavy, Rom. 13. 2. They that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation. Here is very small Encouragement to any to rise up against the lawful Magistrate, for though they should so far prosper here, as to secure themselves from him by this Means, yet there is a King of Kings from whom no Power can shelter them, and this Damnation in the close will prove a sad Prize of their Victories.

The only other Thing in this last Part of your Letter, which I can think needful for me to take any notice of, is in Pag. 46. where (that your Letter, I suppose, might be all of a Piece; and end, as it began, with a foul and false Charge upon me) you are pleas'd to say, That I assure the World, that Her Majesty's Title is only that of a successful Usurpation.

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How's this ? What ? *Her Majesty's Title to the Crown only that of a successful Usurpation ?* And have I said this ? Have I indeed said it, and that too, not as whispering it in secret to some trusty disaffected Persons, but declaring it publickly, publishing it from the Pulpit and from the Press too ? Have I said it, and that, not letting it slip from me as an hasty and inadvertent Expression, but gravely and solemnly, giving my Word upon it ? Have I thus *assured the World*, that *Her Majesty's Title to the Crown is only that of a successful Usurpation ?* If I have done any such Thing, God forgive me ; and Thanks to the Queen for her late gracious Pardon, passed into an Act since the Printing of my last Sermon : For if I have indeed ever said the Thing I am here charg'd with, not only barely saying it, but standing in it, and *assuring the World of it*, I know not what I deserv'd, and it was not a Bishoprick I'm sure. Cease then from henceforward your Wonder, that a Man of *my Character and Authority* shou'd do such a Thing ; and wonder rather that the Government, even *Her Majesties most Mild and Gentle Government*, shou'd suffer such a Thing, especially when done so openly, and by a Man of such *Character and Authority* too, to pass unpunish'd ; wonder rather at my not being particularly, and by Name, excepted out of the late Act of gracious Pardon, and rejoyce with me upon my fortunate Escape : And I, in return, will do
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the same Thing with you, who, for your Sermon and its Defence, was certainly well nigh in the same Danger. This I'm sure of, that some unfortunate Wretches, who between the Years 40 and 60 of the last Century, had Preach'd, Printed, and Practis'd a little too much according to the Principles advanc'd and maintain'd by you in those Two Books, wou'd have given all they were worth in the World, not to have been excepted out of such an Act. And therefore, I hope, I may without Offence say to you (especially since if you believe the Truth of your own Charge against me, you must think that I say the same to my self) in the Words of Scripture : *Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*

“ Well but what is all this to the Purpose,
“ you'll say ? This is the Charge I have
“ brought against you ; that you, *not having*
“ *the Fear of God, &c.* have dared to assure
“ *the World, that Her Majesty's Title, &c.* And
“ now you have read the Charge can you deny
“ it ? Can you disprove it ? Or what other
“ Answer can you make to it ?

Why, Sir, 1. As to other *Answer*, I don't know but that I might Answer it by an Action of *Scan. Mag.* but that I shou'd scorn to fight an Adversary with unequal Weapons.

2. As to *Disproof* ; I beg your Pardon ; for that *Affirmanti incumbit Probatio* you know is a settled Rule. The Proof lies on your Part,

and it belongs to you to make good your Charge; and as for the Disproof of it, that's a Thing I shan't so much as think of, till you shall be pleas'd to add Time, Place, and other Circumstances of the Fact, by your mention of which, I might be furnish'd with some Materials towards the Proof even of a Negative. I mean plainly this; You shou'd have said where, in what Sermon, and in what Page of that Sermon, I have *plainly* said those Words, or given this Assurance to the World. I say, *plainly*; for I must tell you, that I will not allow, nor will any equal Judge allow, of an *Inuendo Proof* of a Charge of such a high Nature as this is; especially as it may be manag'd and improv'd by one that is able to shew, that *St. Paul*, in the 13th *Chap.* to the *Romans*, does not say any Thing for the Divine Institution of Magistracy, nor for a Divine Commission granted to the Magistrate, nor against Resistance and Rebellion, in Case the Subject thinks himself greatly aggriev'd: No, I'll ne'er trust my Life in the Hands of a Man so deadly cunning at Proving and Disproving; unless I may first bar all *Inuendo Proofs*. Till therefore you shall bring some clear Proof of your Charge against me, I shall have nothing to do, but only

3. Stoutly to deny it, and to *assure the World* (upon all the *Character* and *Authority* that I have) that the Charge is utterly and entirely

tirely false. And from you, who, being my Accuser, ought not to be my Judge, I appeal 1. to the *World* (allowing that to be both Witness and Judge) to judge, whether I have said this Thing to them, much more assur'd them of it ; allowing you nevertheless, to furnish them with the best Proofs you have of the Matter. From you I appeal 2. to Her Majesty (your Superior I hope, you'll grant) who commanded the Printing of one of these Sermons, and has been graciously pleas'd to accept a Copy of the other ; to Her I appeal, whether from any Thing she heard in the One, or has read in the Other, she has any Suspicion that my Opinion is, *That her Title to the Crown is only that of a successful Usurpation*, or thinks I have, in either of those Sermons, said or intimated any such Thing. And lastly, from you I appeal to God himself, the Sovereign Judge of all, who knows that I never thought the Thing, which you say I have *assured the World of*. To all which I have nothing more now to add, but only, that I forgive you this Wrong, and heartily pray God to forgive you too.

And now, Sir, having written a full Answer to your Letter, so far as I could think my Self, or the Doctrine deliver'd in my Sermons, concerned in it, I beg leave, in requital for the many *Considerations* which you have been pleas'd to propose to me, to leave this one

Thing with you, being what I think well deserves your most serious Consideration ; *viz.* That before the Fifth Commandment was given by *Moses*, and much more before it was repeated and reinforc'd in the *New Testament*, there had been many *Fathers without natural Affection*, who had extremely exceeded their Paternal Commission, and grossly abus'd their Paternal Power, to the great Hurt, Vexation, Ruin, Destruction, and even Death of their Children ; and yet all the Precepts we meet with, either in the Law or Gospel, relating to the Behaviour of Children to their Parents, are to this Tenor ; *Honour thy Father and Mother ; whoso curseth Father or Mother let him die the Death : Children obey your Parents in all Things, for this is right, &c.* Not one Word or Hint do I remember in the whole Bible, directing, or giving Allowance to Children, to strike, cast off, and much less to kill their Parents, in case of their Cruelty, Madness, or Rage ; or for any Provocation whatsoever. There had been likewise, long before *St. Paul* wrote his Epistle to the *Romans*, (whether 'twas written in *Claudius's* Reign or *Nero's*) many cruel Tyrants, and Monsters of Men, in Possession of the Highest Power ; there had been one (if my Memory fails me not) before, and yet not very long before that Time, of whom the *Historian* relates this Passage, That he wish'd all the Citizens of *Rome* had

had but one Neck, that he might dispatch 'em all at one Blow ; and yet not one word do we meet with in *St. Paul*, or any other *Apostle*, serving to instruct Subjects in the Natural Right that they had in such Cases, to defend themselves by Resistance ; much less to Depose, Judge, Punish, or (which in that Case might have seem'd but a proper Return) to Neck, or Behead their Sovereign ; Nothing, but *let every Soul be subject to the Higher Powers : Ye must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake : Whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God ; and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation, &c.* And lastly, There had been, without all doubt, in all Ages, both long before, and when the *Apostles* wrote their *Epistles*, many bloody and savage *Masters*, who had used their Slaves with the utmost Barbarity, had abus'd, beaten, wounded, ay and killed them too, only for their own Humour ; and yet (tho' I am not sure that the Power and Authority of Masters over their Slaves is as much *Jure Divino*, as that of Parents over their Children, and Magistrates over their Subjects) I do not remember in Scripture any express Allowance, much less Encouragement, given to Slaves to rise up against, or to strike their Masters, and much less to knock them on the Head for publick Good, *i. e.* to release themselves, and their Fellow Servants, from an unreasonable and intolerable

tolerable Servitude. But some Precepts I have met with there, which seem to look quite the other way; as that of *St. Paul to Titus; Exhort Servants to be Obedient to their own Masters, — not answering again.* And especially that of *St. Peter; Servants be Obedient to your Masters with all Fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also the forward.* For this is thank-worthy, if a Man for Conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully; for what Glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your Faults, ye take it patiently? but if when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. Precepts, I think, of the utmost Importance, both to the Honour of Christianity, and the Security of Human Society, tho' some perhaps may be so wicked as to call them *Doctrines of Servitude.* And the Thing, which upon these Suggestions, I wou'd intreat you, for God's sake, for Religion's sake, and for your own Soul's sake, seriously to consider, is, Whether you had not kept closer to your Text, and to the Text of the Gospel too, if, in your celebrated Sermon on *Rom. 13.* you had Preach'd up the general Duties of Obedience and Subjection to the Higher Powers, in such manner, as the *Apostles* did, and as *St. Paul* has enjoyn'd (not *Titus* only, I hope, but) all Preachers of the Gospel to do; Put them in mind to be subject to *Principalities* and

and Powers, and to obey Magistrates; and left them to learn their Natural Right (if you will have it so) to Resist, and Rebel, in Cases of *extreme Exigency, and of some possible Attempts of their Governors, from Buchanan, Hobbes, Milton, Harrington, Collins, Spinoza, or some other Theologico-Political Master; or indeed from corrupt Human Nature itself, which is much more ready to teach its own Rights, and to practise its own Liberties, than 'tis to submit to the Restraints that are laid upon it by God and Religion.*

I only add, That in Case you shall think fit to make any Reply to this Letter, if you shall keep close to the Questions between us; which are, or, I think, may be reduc'd to only these Two, *viz. Whether the Magistrates Power be from God, or from the People? And, Whether or no Subjects have a Coercive Power over their Sovereigns?* I may perhaps, if I can find Leisure for it, give you the Trouble of a Second Letter. But if the Subject of what you may call *an Answer*, shall be any thing else, I promise you now before-hand that you shall have the last Word. For if your Reply shou'd be only, or chiefly, a *Defence of your self* against this my Self-Defence, I fancy the World will by that time be weary of reading our squabbling Letters; so that we shan't need to trouble the Printer with them. Or if it shall be about *the State of Nature, and the Natural Rights of Mankind*

Mankind in such a State, that's what the Scripture speaks very little or nothing of; I don't remember that it speaks of any *State of Nature* but only that sinful wretched State that the Fall has brought us all into: So that the other *State of Nature* may, I think, be a Matter more proper to be consider'd, and debated by Laymen, than by Bishops and Presbyters. Or if it shall be only about *Self-Defence*, against *all possible Attempts of Governors*, or others; I have already solemnly engag'd that I will have nothing to do with that Point. Or Lastly, If it shall be, about *Original Contracts, Revolutions, &c.* I tell you plainly, that I will not write so much as one single Line about any such Matters.

And so commending you, (*heartily*, I assure you, notwithstanding our present Bickerings) to the Grace and Blessing of Almighty God, I bid you farewell, and remain,

S I R,

Your Loving Friend



and Brother,

O F S P. E X O N.